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A Socio-Ecological Assessment of Unemployment Interventions in Cairo, Egypt

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Abstract

An assessment of interventions working on solving the problem of unemployment in Cairo, Egypt was conducted in order to identify strengths, and to map out where interventions fell on a socio-ecological model. A one-day Appreciative Inquiry (AI) workshop was conducted for 16 participants who represented NGOs, social businesses, donors, training centers, recruitment agencies, technical institutes, educational institutions, and governmental organizations. Inductive content data analysis was used to analyze the themes that arose from the AI. Results show that 24% of the interventions work on multiple levels of the socio-ecological system. Strengths identified are having comprehensive interventions that tackle different aspects of unemployment and having access to funding, while participants envisioned a future where there was having an overall, shared vision for dealing with unemployment, strong networks and collaboration, better training programs and improved quality of programs through building capacity, and change in the societal attitudes that negatively influence the employment of individuals in Egypt. Building a coalition for interventions is recommended to enhance collaboration between them.

Keywords: unemployment, socio-ecological model, community interventions, Appreciative Inquiry, collaboration, coalition building, and Egypt.

Due to its multiple, economic, psychological, and social influences on people's lives, unemployment is considered one of the most important occurrences in an individual's life (Carlin, Chambers, Knuckey, Perkins, & Bellis, 2011). There are many interventions working to help solve the problem of unemployment, which address those influences on people's lives. An assessment of those interventions is required to increase their effectiveness. In order to design and assess interventions for unemployment, it is important to first understand 1) the economic, psychological and social effects unemployment has on people's lives; 2) the different types of unemployment; and 3) the causes of unemployment.

The problem of Unemployment

Dealing with the problem of unemployment is not just a matter of sustaining certain skills needed by the market and ensuring that an adequate income is made. Rather, it is highly multifaceted and multidisciplinary that both affects, and is affected by, the different political, social, economic and personal factors taking place in an individual's life. Unemployment has a cost on the person who is unemployed, as well as on the economy. It can create a "domino effect" because when people who are unemployed reduce their spending, they cause others to be unemployed (Schiller, 2006). Goldsmith (1978) argues that the effect of unemployment does not only lead to economic deprivation, but also deprives the person who is unemployed from the sense of security, identity, and social integration. Moreover, it leads to higher rates of suicide, domestic violence, health issues (Schiller, 2006), marital breakdown, drug abuse, and crimes (Goldsmith, 1978).

In addition to understanding the serious repercussions unemployment has on people's lives, it is crucial to both identify and understand the different types of unemployment. According to Schiller (2006), there are four different types of unemployed individuals: (1) discouraged workers, who are no longer seeking jobs because they gave up, and which is more common during periods of recession; (2) underemployed, who are people who are

employed in a job that does not allow them to use their maximum potential; (3) phantom unemployed, who are people who are not properly seeking jobs but have reported that they are; and (4) frictional unemployed, who are new people entering the market or people changing jobs and are looking for new jobs. Frictional unemployment, will remain even if the unemployment rate decreases because there will always be new graduates who are entering the market no matter how low the unemployment rate becomes.

The cause of unemployment can be cyclic or structural. Cyclic unemployment arises when there is less need for workers and more demand for jobs. This is a result of the world's population growth, new segments of people entering the employment market such as people who leave their specialization and seek other jobs, and women entering the market. Structural unemployment occurs when the gap between the educational skills and the market needs, and that technology and new machinery reduces the dependence of employers on labor intensive work and reduces dependence on human labor (Goldsmith, 1978).

Understanding the effects of unemployment, the different kinds of unemployment, and different causes of unemployment helps in identifying target populations and the levels at which an intervention is needed, thus enabling the development of more effective interventions. It also makes it clear that a comprehensive and varied approach is required to deal with the variety of effects, the different needs, and the diverse circumstances, which can impact the experience of unemployment.

Unemployment in Egypt

Unemployment rates. The unemployment rate in Egypt has been constantly increasing, since the 1970's. According to Hassan and Sassanpour (2008), in the mid 1970's, during the public investment in industries and the guaranteed employment policies set by the government, the unemployment rate was 2-3%. Then, in 1980's it rose to 5-7%, with an increase in youth unemployment. During the 1990's to 2000, it continued to grow to 8-11%.

However, in 2005, with the government plan of economic reform, it declined to 9%. In the last quarter of 2011, after the revolution, it reached 12.4% (Egypt unemployment rate, n.d.). Aridas (2011) determines the unemployment rate by dividing the number of unemployed persons by the total labor force. According to Leisinger (2010), the world population grows one billion approximately every 12 years, and reached 7 billion in 2011, while 85% of this population growth is in developing countries, including Egypt. The 12.4% unemployment rate in Egypt is the highest among countries in the region, such as Qatar at 0.60%, United Arab Emirates at 4.3%, Saudi Arabia at 10.5%, and Tunisia at 18% (Trading Economics, 2012). In addition, the labor force is the number of the employed plus the number of the unemployed who are seeking jobs (Egypt unemployment rate, n.d.). The labor force in Egypt is comprised of 27.9 million people, 2.5 million of whom are unemployed, 6.6 million work in the public sector, and 18.7 million in the private sector (Egyptian Centre for Economic Studies [ECES], 2011).

Causes for unemployment. One of the reasons for the high rate of unemployment in Egypt is the high rate of youth unemployment (Assaad & Roudi-Fahimi, 2007), at 23.4% (International Labor Office [ILO], 2011). Thus, although this study does not necessarily focus on interventions provided for youth, it is necessary to look into youth representation in Egypt, as they comprise a high percentage of the population and are new entrants to the job market. Young people (ages 15 to 24) represent 25% of the working age population, globally (Ikutu International, 2010). The Global Employment Trends 2011 report by the International Labor Office (ILO) states that youth issues are one of the top priorities of the national development goals. Youth are considered a resource that if provided with sufficient opportunities and encouraging environment, can lead to social change, economic development, and technological innovation, on the individual, community, national, and international level (The Youth Employment Summit [YES], 2002).

In Egypt, youth, aged 18 to 29, comprised 19.8 million, or 23.5% of the total population in 2010 (United Nations Development Programme, [UNDP], 2010). Unemployment is more common among the educated youth, and is mainly due to labor market insertion, underlying in youth seeking jobs for the first time after graduation (Hassan & Sassanpour, 2008), with 700,000 new job seekers expected annually (ECES, 2011). Basic education, technical and vocational training, entrepreneurship training, creating new job opportunities, increasing social services, and labor market policies, all contribute to solving the problem of youth unemployment (Ikatu International, n.d.). In addition, according to El-Megharbel (2007), the problem of unemployment in Egypt is based on the demand for job creation, which results from several factors. The first is that there is a mismatch of the skills provided by the Egyptian educational system and the skills needed in the job market. Second, the private sector does not provide enough job opportunities, which contributes to the continual increase of the informal sector, as individuals resort to it to provide a source of income. Finally, the government has not had a comprehensive strategy for job creation policies.

Literature reveals that the informal sector plays a crucial role in growing the Egyptian economy as the number of people joining the sector is constantly growing (El-Ehwany, & El-Laithy, n.d.). Small and medium enterprises (SMEs) are defined by employing up to 50 employees; however, enterprises differ according to their location, size, ownership, size, and formality (United Nations Development Programme, [UNDP], 2005). However, SMEs face a number of challenges. These challenges include the gap between technical and vocational education and the labor market needs, and the low supply of financial assistance by non-governmental organizations, commercial banks, and the Social Development Fund, which supplies 6% only of the SMEs in Egypt. This in turn affects the high rates of unemployment in Egypt.

Thus the high rate of youth unemployment, the employment opportunities offered by the informal sector, and the potential for the development of small businesses, require an integrated approach to reform. Changes in labor market policy, development of education and training programs, financial and entrepreneurial support for the creation of new jobs, and an increase in social services are all needed to solve the problem of unemployment in Egypt. Such changes require that the problem of unemployment be addressed through a socio-ecological approach.

The Socio-Ecological Model

Assaad & Roudi-Fahimi (2007) argue that each government in the Middle East and North Africa should choose ways of reform to solve the problem of unemployment by improving educational and job opportunities in a way that studies the problem in context, according to the circumstances and needs of each country. They also highlighted the importance of collaboration between different entities to solve the problem of unemployment. This contextual and collaborative approach is key to the socio-ecological model. The socio-ecological model is well suited for dealing with the complex problem of unemployment because it places the unemployed within their social context, and examines the inter-relational factors that contribute to it.

With the emergence of community psychology in the 1960's, in the United States (Nelson & Prilleltensky, 2010), there was a heightened focus placed on socio-economic and political factors of individuals' problems and well-being, and the socio-ecological model was developed for use in community interventions (Duncan, Bowman, Naidoo, Pillay, & Roos, 2007). The origin of the ecological model emerged from the Darwinian theory of evolution that is based on the development of species as they adapt to the changes in their environment (Duncan et al., 2007). Bronfenbrenner (1977), then, created a theory of development that understands the individual in social context and studies the inter-relational factors

contributing to his/her development. The individual who is examined is placed in the center of multiple circles representing different, inter-related, levels of systems that are linked to the context. Even while studying how humans develop the interpretation and perception of concepts, Gabora, Rosch, and Aerts (2008), stated that unless the concept is put in a context, it is difficult to understand because it could have several meanings. Similar to the development of individuals, if one studies a societal issue without examining the sociological, psychological, political, and economical factors, the issue is not properly conceptualized.

It is important to understand the ecological differences and similarities of various intervention programs that work to solve the problem of unemployment, in order to design more effective programs. There is not a single factor that leads to a problem; the interaction between individual factors, relationships, community, and societal factors explains why some people are more at risk for a problem than others, and how each individual or community reacts differently (World Health Organization [WHO], n.d.). Darling (2007) states that the ecological theory is not interested in *how* developmental processes vary from one context to the other, but rather, *why* they do. According to Kelly (2006), the main principles of the ecological model, are: (1) interdependence – changes in one part of the system lead to changes in other systems; (2) adaptation – problems should be studied in context because individuals and communities adapt differently to issues; (3) succession- different events in history causes changes in the way individuals in communities adapt to new situations; and (4) distribution of resources- the way resources are identified and utilized within a community helps understand how the community functions. Kelly's model could be used to assess how interventions function in an ecological framework.

The Socio-ecological Model differs from Bronfenbrenner's model in that it is more suited for use in community development problems, rather than individual development. It

divides the system into four levels. For example, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and the Violence Prevention Alliance viewed violence in communities as a result of interactive factors, using the socio-ecological model to provide the required interventions (WHO, n.d.; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [CDC], n.d.). They explained the four levels of the system, according to the socio-ecological model, as follows: (1) the individual level that identifies physical, biological, and personal factors of the individual dealing with the problem; interventions at this level are more concerned with the individual's behaviors, attitudes, and beliefs. (2) The relationship level that focuses on the relationship between the individual and his surrounding networks, while interventions at this level focus on strategies that enhance the relationship between the individual and his networks. (3) The community level that is concerned with the communities in which those networks exist and that enhances the development of the problem. Interventions at the community level are focused on the processes in which those communities function, and finally. (4) The societal level that deals with political, economic, and social factors that promote the problem, and hence, interventions at this level are more focused on policy-making, and change.

If we apply the socio-ecological model to the problem of unemployment we see that interventions must tackle issues on all four levels. The individual level deals with the psychological factors associated with unemployment, such as the level of self-esteem and resilience of the individual who is unemployed in being able to deal with the stress that is accompanied by unemployment, and personal factors, such as financial status, as well as the language, interpersonal, and professional skills that qualify him/her for a job. Intervention at the individual level requires programs that provide psychological support, financial assistance, or training on language, interpersonal, entrepreneurial, and technical skills, and career guidance. The relationship level consists of the support network of the unemployed, representing his/her family, potential workplaces, and organizations working with

communities who have high unemployment rates, and those who provide services to them.

Intervention programs working on this level will focus on developing the social network for individuals who are unemployed, to link them to potential employers and the job market. The

community level consists of the schools, universities in which the individual who becomes unemployed receives education, and organizations working to help the problem of

unemployment such as social entrepreneurship and social businesses, as well as companies

where job opportunities are available. Intervention programs working at this level deal with the processes by which those organizations function and enhancing the collaboration between

different entities to increase employment. The societal level consists of the economic and political situation, as well as the social policies that hinder employment in a community.

Intervention programs working on the societal level focus on policies that enhance

employment, such as wage policies, and policies that regulate the partnerships and

collaborations between organizations, as well as policies regulating the division of labor, and

raising awareness of employment issues such as including people with disabilities in the labor market, and donor agencies that fund interventions that deal with unemployment (see figure

1). Figure 1 visualizes the approaches mentioned in the example above; however, only the

ones that are written in bold font are addressed in this study, according to the available

literature.

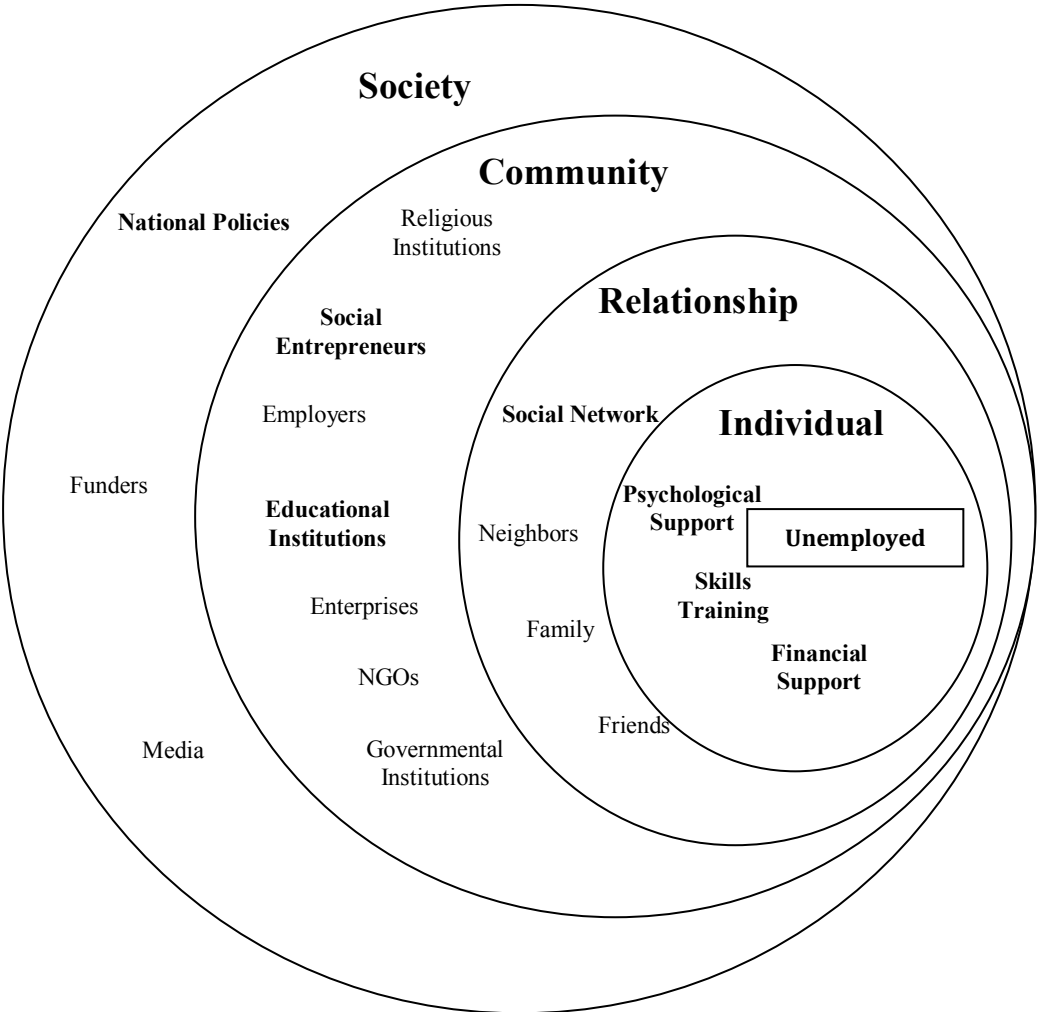


Figure 1. Examples of interventions dealing with unemployment at different levels of the socio-ecological model.

*Approaches in bold font are the ones addressed in the study.

Dealing with Unemployment at Different Socio-Ecological Levels

There are a variety of approaches that can be taken to address the problem of unemployment, as illustrated by the socio-ecological model. An assessment of the types of unemployment interventions available was conducted to evaluate youth unemployment interventions. In 2007, Betcherman, Godfery, Puerto, Rother, and Stavreska (2007) reported that there were many interventions around the world that aimed at youth employment; however, they did not have a systemic and scientific basis and were not evaluated to measure if they were successful and had an impact on communities. In response, the World Bank created a Youth Employment Inventory (YEI), based on documentation from interventions

from 289 countries from all regions of the world. The documentation classified the types of youth employment interventions into training, policy change and public work, counseling and job searching skills, financial assistance, enhancing entrepreneurship, inclusion and eliminating discrimination, and comprehensive programs that work on multiple levels. The most common type of interventions in the Youth Employment Inventory were those providing skills training for young people, while comprehensive interventions accounted for 32% of the interventions evaluated. This is considered a high rate, compared to other kinds of interventions mentioned, and it is reported that these kinds of interventions had an effective impact on their communities, providing support for a socio-ecological approach. However, these approaches are costly and are replaced, in many countries, by smaller interventions that are focused on a specific level. Thus, there is a need to not only assess the comprehensiveness of interventions in Cairo, but also to suggest ways to foster collaboration across smaller interventions in order to make a comprehensive approach affordable.

It is important to describe the different types of interventions at each level of the socio-ecological model in order to not only better understand the nature of these interventions, but to also see the linkages that exist between them and make collaboration possible across levels. Particular attention will be given to the types of interventions that were part of the current study in order to provide a clearer picture of the participants and the work that they do.

Interventions at the individual level. Interventions dealing with unemployment that focus on the individual level provide psychological and financial support, and training, including entrepreneurship skills trainings. The current study is concerned with these types of interventions at the individual level.

Unemployment and psychological problems. Unemployment contributes greatly to mental illness, such as insomnia, depression, and lack of self-identity (Hutt, 2010). Goldsmith

(1978) mentioned that divorce is one of the main consequences of long-term unemployment, and that divorce rates rise during the time of economic recessions (Mielach, 2011), when unemployment rates get higher. Youth unemployment, specifically, influences the mental health of the unemployed. According to Hutt (2010), Martina Milbury, the Chief Executive of Prince's Trust, a youth charity organization that helps the young in the United Kingdom, the longer young people stay unemployed, the greater the risk for developing a mental health problem. Hammarstorm and Janlert (2002) conducted a 14-year follow up, from 1981 to 1995, longitudinal study in Sweden for school leavers, who are between the age of 16 and 25, to examine the effect of early unemployment, on adulthood using questionnaires. The study showed that early unemployment causes not only health issues when a person is young, but its effect continues to influence their lives 14 years later, in terms of psychological and smoking problems.

Unemployment is a threat to the wellbeing of the individual who is unemployed, and is considered a stressor in a person's life. Resilience and other competencies such as interpersonal, communication, and problem-solving skills are powerful components of well-being (Cowen, 1991). People who are unemployed and who have resilient qualities, such as independence and self-assertiveness, are more likely to be more persistent while looking for a job, and are less likely to develop depressive symptoms during their time of unemployment (Moorhouse & Caltabiano, 2007). Thus, interventions working on the individual level can focus on strengthening the resilient qualities of the unemployed to be able to deal with the consequences of unemployment.

The strong correlation between unemployment and individual wellbeing raises the importance of interventions providing psychological support, through counseling, for example. Few interventions work on providing psychological and health care support to the unemployed (Harris et al., 2002), although there is strong support from the literature about

the correlation between unemployment and mental health issues. Harris Webster, Harris and Lee (1998) suggested several approaches to dealing with the mental health issues resulting from unemployment, one of which is the necessity for collaboration between intervention programs dealing with unemployed and centers or institutions offering mental health services. Similarly, Moorhouse and Caltabiano (2007) recommended that job seeking agencies, that help people find jobs, include interventions focusing on psychological support to the unemployed, through enhancing their self-esteem, building coping skills, and teaching them relaxation techniques to use in job interviews. Although interventions providing psychological support people who are unemployed, Harris et al. (1998) suggests evaluating existing unemployment interventions that provide such services, as well as building the capacity of mental health so that they can work more effectively with the unemployed. This suggestion for increasing effectiveness is an intervention that works at the community level, where building capacity of mental health institutions is necessary; however, it is also interrelated with interventions working at the individual level, thus utilizing a more comprehensive and coordinated approach.

Entrepreneurship and financial assistance. Another way to intervene at the individual level is by providing training and financial assistance. Being an entrepreneur requires being able to make decisions about business location, analyzing the growth and sustainability of the business (Sánchez, 2011), risk-taking, and creativity (Garba, 2010). Garba (2010) reviewed the importance of entrepreneurship education in eliminating poverty and unemployment, specifically for young people, through incorporating it in education, which requires government support and policy change. Some community interventions focus on training unemployed individuals on entrepreneurial skills in order to be able to establish new projects that would act as a source of income. In Egypt, the Social Fund for Development (SFD) provides training on how to start a new business for 18-year-olds (Amer,

2007). Similarly, Injaz Foundation in Egypt and Education and Employment Alliance offer interventions to help the unemployed, through the Achievement and Developing Skills for the Workplace projects, respectively. Those interventions offer skills training, such as vocational, on-the-job, and entrepreneurial training, to bridge the gap between educational institutions and the job market in Egypt (Youth Employment Inventory [YEI], n.d.).

In light of helping individuals establish Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs), financial assistance is also provided to support this approach, through microcredit programs. Microcredit is defined as “a loan for business purposes amounting to less than 25,000 Euros” (European Union [EU], 2010, p. 5); it facilitates the process of moving from being unemployed to being self-employed (Braun, 2011). According to Karatas and Helvacioğlu (2008) microloans, given to individuals as a form of financial assistance to open small businesses, do not only lead to economic growth in poor areas, but they also provide opportunities for social inclusion, by supporting the unemployed. Braun (2011) found microcredit to be very efficient during recessions and crisis; however, it is crucial to provide training and advising to individuals taking the loan, because they might lack the qualifications to run their business to repay the loans. The European Union has put a lot of focus on microcredit, and the European Commission has included it in its measures to fight unemployment (Braun, 2011). In Turkey, SMEs constitute 40% of the workplace, excluding the agriculture SMEs, where microcredit is mainly provided through banks, and a few initiatives that are run by nonprofit organizations (Karatas & Helvacioğlu, 2008). Similarly, in Korea, SMEs represented 99% of the workplace in 1999 (Kang, n.d.). Thus, providing financial assistance to individuals through microcredit is one of the interventions introduced, worldwide, to deal with unemployment. Accordingly, Alashanek Ya Balady (AYB), a non-governmental organization in Egypt working with poor areas, and Development Banks offer access to microfinance.

Interventions at the relationship level. Interventions which focus on dealing with unemployment at the relationship level look at the impact of family, friends, co-workers and other relationships on unemployment. In particular, the current study focuses on interventions dealing with the problem of unemployment by enhancing the social network of people who are unemployed, in order to provide a support system, which can lead to more access to job opportunities.

Social networks. The North West Mental Wellbeing Survey (NWMWS) was conducted to measure the indicators of the wellbeing of the individual (Carlin et al., 2011). The NWMWS showed that social support, such as strong relationship with family members and friends and being a member in an organization, is one of the factors that highly contributes to the resilience of people who are unemployed (Carlin et al., 2011). Beck, Wagener, and Grix (2005) also highlighted the importance of social networks in coping with unemployment. They explained that social networks can be in the form of informal groups or community centers, and that these increase the feeling of usefulness and help the unemployed find jobs by increasing their networks. In 2001, during the recession in the United States, a group of unemployed workers formed an informal social network, under the name of “The 405 Club”, which later transformed into an online network, and led to the employment of individuals (Taylor, 2009). Moreover, LinkedIn and Facebook are also social networks that help increase the network of the unemployed. Di Maio (2009) highlights the importance of being able to further utilize this asset and build on those networks to focus on unemployment, and the U.S. Department of Labor decided to use social networks to reduce unemployment, through partnering with Facebook, and posting new jobs on the page (Ribeiro, 2011). In Egypt, at the government level, the Egyptian Labor Market Service Reform (ELMSR), is a program that was initiated to link the unemployed to the labor market, and provide

information about the labor market to the unemployed in all governorates through information centers (Amer, 2007).

Interventions at the community level. The current study focuses on interventions such as social entrepreneurship and social business that allow more employment opportunities for people. This study also assesses education as it occurs at the community level of the system, and through which technical education and vocational training reform increases employment of its graduates by providing them with skills that are needed in the employment market.

Social Entrepreneurship. Several approaches have been adopted to combat unemployment on the community level, one of which is entrepreneurship. Sánchez (2011) defined entrepreneurship as a model that identifies, assesses, develops, and exploits opportunities and resources, studies the circumstances that influence them, and has an impact on economic and social development. Cowling and Bygrane (2003) studied entrepreneurial necessity in relation to unemployment rates in 37 nations. The study concluded that the higher the contribution of youth to the rate of unemployment, the more entrepreneurship is necessary. This is due to the fact that young people see that there are limited opportunities in waged employment, and because a large number of young people who are unemployed lack skills or education, which makes finding jobs limited. Consequently, youth seek entrepreneurship projects. Small and medium enterprises are the key to economic growth, employment creation, and poverty elimination (Bikhazi, Buckley, & Kebiri, 2009). Nouruzi, Westover, and Rahimi (2010) stated that social entrepreneurship can be individuals, groups, or organizations, and they combine profit (business), with non-profit (social purposes). Seelos and Mair (2004) mentioned SEKEM, a social enterprise in Egypt, as an example of a leading model that was able to combine social needs, economic development, and business factors, and lead to the employment of 2000 employees.

Guclu, Dees, and Anderson (2002) further explained the social entrepreneurship model, by stating the process that a social entrepreneur goes through. While generating new ideas, the social entrepreneur creates an idea that is based on personal experience or preference, and then, he/she identifies unmet social needs that are challenges in the society. The social entrepreneur should be able to identify and understand the assets available in the society in order to create an opportunity from the personal idea. This is also a common factor in working with an ecological model. Increasing social entrepreneurship as an intervention dealing with unemployment is linked to being able to work in an ecological model by assessing the assets available and making use of them. These assets could be other interventions mentions at different level of the socio-ecological model.

Social business. Another form of community intervention is social business. Yunus (2009) explained that social business is another sector that helps solve the social and economic problems in the world, as in that kind of business, the investor does not make profit out of it. The profit is allocated by the company to improve the products they market, and outreach for wider population. Muhammad Yunus, who is a Nobel Peace Prize winner, has established the concept of social business, which has helped millions of the poorest people in the world to overcome poverty (Etsy, 2011). It is similar to social entrepreneurship despite the fact that in social business, profit from the organization goes to the development of the organization and its employees and not to the investors. Social business differs from nonprofits in that it is self-sustained from the profit that the business makes (Elsen, 2010). The idea behind this concept inspired the emergence of microcredit. Dr. Muhammad Yunus was able to establish and manage the Grameen Bank to give millions of poor people, especially women, in Bangladesh, loans to start up their own businesses (Yunus, 1997).

Initiatives to establish organizations that help people become self-employed work on the organizational or community level of the system. The European Commission initiated

aEuropean initiative for the development of microcredit in support of growth and development, through which the Joint Action to Support Micro-finance Institutions in Europe (JASMINE) is responsible for providing support to non-bank microcredit providers such as nonprofit organizations, and promotes the best practices of managing microcredit (European Union [EU], 2010). Similarly, Kang (n.d.), explained that special programs made especially for lending loans, such as Credit Guarantee Programme succeeded in promoting economic growth during economic crisis in Korea. Thus, one of the interventions that have been proven successful to work in times of crisis to support employability is implementing the concept of social business and microcredit loan companies. This illustrates the importance of intervening at the community level to provide organization, such as non-governmental organizations, with financial support to offer micro-loans to individuals who are unemployed to start up their own businesses.

Technical education and vocational training reform (TEVT). According to Wallenborn (2010) China, Malaysia, and Korea gave priority to vocational education and training development in order to sustain economic development. There are many studies that show the gap that exists between the Technical Education and Vocational Training (TEVT) and the Labor market. For example, the European Training Foundation has carried on a project in the partner Mediterranean countries of the EU on quality and quality assurance of Vocational Education and Training, and Egypt was among the partner countries. Analysis has shown that insufficient concern has been given to the monitoring and evaluation of the quality of the outcomes of the vocational training reform in terms of their efficiency, employability, and their relevance to the labor market's needs (Masson, Baati, & Seyfried 2010; Karpp, 1999). This gap exists because of poor quality of education and lack of quality control in technical and vocational schools and institutes.

Shah, Rahman, Ajmal, and Hamidullah (2011) conducted a situational analysis of a technical education and vocational training program in Punjab, Pakistan, by gathering data from 100 teachers. Data revealed that the curriculum was good and efficient; however, incentives were needed for teachers, better equipment for training, as well as stronger linkages to the labor market, specifically the labor market of the Middle East, as they find better jobs there. Quality is decreasing because teachers are fresh graduates of the military, consequently they are influenced by the military system, academic achievement is based on memorization, analytical abilities are not developed, the curriculum needs to be updated, and there is no practical hands-on experience provided during technical education or vocational training (Krapp, 1999). Waid (2006) has conducted an evaluation for the Technical Skills Training Grants Program in Missouri, under the U.S. department of Labor, and he concluded that the academic achievement the grantees received through their education is not as important as the practical experience and skills.

In addition, Fitzpatrick (2009) pointed out the importance of two-year institutes, such U.S. community colleges, in fostering economic growth, as they are recognized with their focus on practical experience, which responds to the unpredicted changes of the labor market needs. Consequently, it is essential to work on technical education and vocational training reform. In a review of the cost-effectiveness of vocational training (VT), Tsang (1997) reported the cost of VT to include human development for its employees, trainers and instructors, equipment, and physical structure. This review suggests that VT is cost-effective only if graduates of institutes benefit from the training, and are employed in jobs that allow them to apply the skills they learned. Iosif (2010) added that the efficiency of VT programs depends highly on its quality, which entails the effectiveness of the training, the extent of program outreach, satisfaction of the employers in the market, and the effectiveness of the planning and administration of the program.

To better understand the nature of technical and vocational education in Egypt in order to design effective interventions, the Egyptian education system must be reviewed. The division of education in Egypt is classified into General Education, which includes general secondary and high institutes and universities, the Technical and Vocational education, which includes secondary technical education, post-secondary technical education, and vocational secondary schools, and Vocational Training or apprenticeship, which is not affiliated to the ministry of education (Krapp, 1999).

The National Report of Arab Republic of Egypt from 1990 to 2000 states that the objectives of technical education are to educate and prepare technicians to the Egyptian labor market in the field of industry, commerce and management, services, and agriculture, and develop the talents of students' and potentials (National Center for Educational Research and Development, 2001). However, this is not put into action, so it is necessary to review the challenges of the technical education system in Egypt, and work on the reform of the institutions to provide better opportunities for its graduates, who become unemployed and rejected by the labor market.

There are challenges faced by Technical education and vocational training in Egypt, which guide how interventions for reform are designed. Previous literature has discussed the challenges of TEVT in Egypt, which reflects problems faced in all levels of the system. Although this section discusses the intervention at the community level, the challenges faced are interrelated, addressing different levels. Masson et al. (2010) argued that the fact that the vocational training (VT) is not under the ministry of education, separates it from the rest of the education system. Moreover, VT is affiliated with more than 20 institutions in Egypt, representing different sectors (Amer, 2007), which creates one of the challenges faced by TEVT reform as it makes it difficult to maintain and monitor quality.

Another challenge that occurs in TEVT in Egypt is that there is inequality of education, where more attention is given to higher education, creating a socio-economic gap. As Krapp (1999) argues, the Egyptian culture's obsession with higher education is one of the major problems facing TEVT in Egypt. More focus is given to higher education in Egypt, as Cupito and Langsten (2010) stated, there were only three universities in 1952 Alexandria, Cairo, and Ain Shams universities, attended by privileged elites; however, new policies and the rights for education and expansion of facilities and universities led to larger enrollment in higher universities. While the Egyptian constitution supports the right for education for all citizens, and equal opportunities for all Egyptians, this is not reflected in policy (Cupito & Langsten, 2010). By placing value on the certificate earned more than on practical experience, discrimination in education has left only people with low socio-economic statuses attending technical and vocational schools, which in turn has resulted in a loss of prestige for TEVT.

Krapp (1999) outlined a list of problems facing TEVT in Egypt, which urges reform of the system. These are unemployed graduates due to the unmet needs of the employers in the labor market, increased number of drop-outs, lack of effective teaching methods and material, limited resources leading to financial corruption, and lack of practical hands-on experience, except for the three-year apprenticeship. Graduates of technical schools lack the experience needed by the Egyptian employment market and in subsequence, are not employable, which places them under the pressure of being affected by the negative effects of unemployment.

There is a need for an intervention program that includes elements that focus on additional training and education they need to receive, their social integration into society and finding an employment niche for them. According to Amer (2007), Employment-oriented Training, is one type of VT in Egypt, which targets unemployed graduates, and employers in

the job market are involved in developing the programs. These types of programs are intervening at both the individual, through providing training, and at the community level, where it is trying to establish and design programs to increase productivity of employers.

Interventions at the societal level. The current study focuses on the policies that support the interventions working at different levels of the socio-ecological model. This section highlights the importance of interventions working at the societal level, and the necessity to have interventions, working at different levels, to collaborate to better serve the problem of unemployment.

Policy change to improve employability. There are many ways through which policy interventions can contribute to help solve the problem of unemployment. Labor market flexibility, which is adapting to economic and social changes, can be enhanced through policy-making and changes (ECES, 2011). Policy interventions can be short-run, such as helping the self-employed to improve their businesses through enhancing policies of small and medium enterprises, and help people in vulnerable employment to find better job opportunities (ECES, 2011). According to El-Megharbel (2007), this can be done through trade policies, to increase exports, which eventually create job opportunities, and labor market policies by the government, such as public work programs to develop rural areas and accordingly create job opportunities to the local people in newly established services. She also mentions other examples such as programs to develop micro and small enterprises, and human development policies that regulate allocating resources to provide on-the-job training of employees and workers, after they get a job.

According to the MENA-OECD Investment Programme (2010), SME policy in Egypt has two dimensions, one is the institutional framework, underlying in the collaboration between different entities to promote SME policies and delegation of responsibilities among them. The other dimension is the targeted policy tools such as enhancing SME innovation

through increasing financial assistance for SMEs and operation support to SMEs through having business incubators. The latter is considered among the short-run policy interventions.

Long-run policies, however, include educational reform policies, as well as helping marginalized groups, such as women and youth, find jobs (ECES, 2011). Education reform includes technical education and vocational training reform. In Egypt, for example, 1.3 million students are expected to continue their intermediate school years, annually, among which 65% are in technical and vocational education (Nasr, 2010). Thus, it is essential to work on policy change in this sector of education. Policy work in Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET), is implemented through a partnership between the Egyptian government and the European Union through working on a policy reform initiative of the TVET (Nasr, 2010; TVET Reform Programme, 2007). The initiative's objectives are to promote the Egyptian enterprises' competitiveness and capacity in local and international markets, establish partnerships between the private sector and technical and vocational schools, modernize TVET institutions and curriculum, provide career guidance and counseling to graduates, and improve the quality of administering technical and vocational institutions (Nasr, 2010).

In addition to TVET reform, there are several ways through which the government can help social entrepreneurship through policy work. The government can promote the start-up period of social entrepreneurs, reward social entrepreneurs for their outstanding success, which can encourage others' performances, and most importantly enhance entrepreneurship education by providing training in different stages of education on how to be entrepreneurs, and the advantages of entrepreneurship (Noruzi et al., 2010). Thus, policy work enhances and provides support to all other interventions working on solving the problem of unemployment, at other levels of the socio-ecological model.

The Current Study

The purpose of this study is to (1) map community interventions working at the four levels of the socio-ecological model to help solve the problem of unemployment in Cairo, Egypt; (2) identify the assets available for a sample of those community interventions; and (3) work with these interventions to develop a plan for moving in the direction of a socio-ecological approach to unemployment. Community interventions are interventions that identify and manage resources to serve the development of communities (Duncan, 2007), and they arise from formal or community-based organizations such as non-governmental organizations, and social or political movements to promote social change in communities, through working with marginalized groups to reduce oppressions formed by societal, economic, or political factors (Neslon & Prilleltensky, 2010). This study looks at community interventions that work with unemployed individuals, and those at risk of being unemployed.

Research questions.

Based on the literature reviewed and relevant theory the following research questions will be explored:

- 1) What are the programs and interventions available for people who are unemployed in Cairo?
- 2) What are the strengths and visions of those programs and interventions?
- 3) How can those strengths be used to adopt a socio-ecological model in order to maximize the effectiveness of those programs and interventions in addressing the problem of unemployment?

Methods

Setting

The workshop was held under the umbrella of AlashanekYaBalady Association for Sustainable Development (AYB), which is a non-governmental organization. Because AYB

has an interest in collaborating with other organizations on the problem of unemployment, they were interested in sponsoring the research, and provided a list of contacts.

An initial meeting was held with the founder and chairperson of AYB to explain the purpose of conducting an Appreciative Inquiry (AI) workshop for interventions dealing with unemployment in Cairo, and to discuss the benefits of the workshop, and its expected outcomes. AYB was chosen because it is an organization that works on multiple levels of the ecological system to help solve the problem of unemployment.

AYB has been working on the development of youth and women in poor areas, since 2005, through offering trainings, life coaching, employment opportunities, and microloans, as well as enhancing partnerships between the public and private sector (Alashanek Ya Balady [AYB], 2011). AYB implements two training programs; the first offers career guidance, personal coaching, literacy, soft, and specialized skills. The second offers vocational training (AYB, 2011). AYB also implements an employment program that advocates for employee rights, and places beneficiaries in factories, companies, and organizations, based on partnerships with them (AYB, 2011). In addition, AYB offers micro-credit and small loans to its beneficiaries.

As active participants in the Egyptian community, they have several links to intervention programs and possess a large database of contacts that the researcher was able to have access to for the purpose of this workshop. Furthermore, as active participants in the Egyptian community and experts in the area of unemployment, their sponsorship of this workshop increases the chance of data from the workshop being utilized, granted legitimacy to the workshop, and built the capacity of AYB itself. A staff member from AYB was assigned to assist with the project, and was familiarized with conducting AI and the socio-ecological model.

Participants

Staff at organizations who implement unemployment interventions were contacted by e-mail and phone and asked to participate in a one-day Appreciative Inquiry workshop. The organizations contacted included those working at the individual, relationship, community, and society level, and represented non-governmental organizations, profit and non-profit organizations, social businesses, donors, training centers, recruitment agencies, technical institutes, educational institutions, and governmental organizations. These potential participants were asked to represent their organization by participating in an Appreciative Inquiry workshop, as part of the research for a Masters thesis. The invitation was limited to two representatives from each organization. The sample was a non-probability sample using purposive sampling that seeks specific groups (Trochim, 2006). Invitations were sent via e-mail to 42 staff members. Additional contacts were obtained through the snowballing sampling (Trochim, 2006) by asking potential participants to forward the invitation via e-mail to other interventions who might be interested to participate in the workshop. Out of the participants who received the invitation, 14 did not respond, eight apologized due to other commitments, one due to unsuitable location, one due to language barrier, three were not interested in participating, and three invitations failed to reach the participants. There were 19 participants who registered for the workshop, but three did not attend.

Procedures

Appreciative Inquiry. In order to work with community interventions to map, assess, and plan around their work with unemployment, an Appreciative Inquiry was conducted. According to Watkins and Mohr (2001), Appreciative Inquiry (AI) is defined as “a collaborative and highly participative, system wide approach to seeking, identifying and enhancing the life-giving forces that are present when a system is performing optimally in human, economic and organizational terms” (p. 22). AI is an asset-based approach to

building organizational capacity, as it identifies the strengths of organizations which enable them to function well within communities (Coghlan, Preskill, & Catsambas, 2003), helps create visions, develop a strategic plan, and helps in evaluation (Serrat, 2008). AI highlights tasks and resources, through engaging participants from the community or organization, in a workshop setting, through which personal successes and experiences of community and organization members are related to future plans (Coghlan et al., 2003). In the data collection process of AI, objective data is not the goal; rather, it explores the strengths and assets of communities as seen by community members (Peterson, 2000). Annecke and Roux (n. d.) presented AI as a tool to be used to build capacity of a community, solve problems of poverty and social injustice, and envision the future, through a socio-ecological participation of different stakeholders in the community.

There are several models used to conduct AI, one of which is the 4-D Model, underlying in the Discover, Dream, Design, and Destiny stages (Seel, 2008), and the 4-I Model, Initiate, Inquire, Imagine, and Innovate (Peterson, 2000). Figure 2 illustrates the 4I-Model by Watkins and Mohr (2001). The Initiate stage that is provided by Watkins and Mohr is not present in all models of AI. This stage prepares the participants from the beginning for the planning in the Innovate stage (Peterson, 2000). The Initiate stage was necessary to help participants in the workshop relate how AI, as a tool, could lead to outcomes that can lead to community change. In other 4I-Models of AI, it starts with the Inquire stage, and adds the Implement stage at the end of the model. Since participants are not working together in one organization and the purpose of the study is an assessment, the Implement stage was not necessary to include, as they will not be implementing the plan developed in the Innovate stage. The 4-I Model of the AI can be used as a tool to gather data to assess the strengths and assets of the community, on all different levels of the system, to address a problem such as unemployment, but through an asset-based approach instead of a problem-focused approach.

The Appreciative Inquiry workshop for interventions dealing with unemployment was held on May 10, 2012, at The American University in Cairo (AUC), New Cairo, in a meeting room, from 8:30 am to 3:30 pm, where refreshments, snacks, and lunch were offered. The workshop was mostly conducted in English but Arabic was used frequently during the workshop. Participants signed two consent forms, one written in English and the other in Arabic, before starting the workshop (see appendix A for the English version, and appendix B for the Arabic version).

The workshop started with the Initiate stage of the AI. In this stage, participants were introduced to the AI approach, including a discussion of how it can lead to positive change and a plan for taking future steps (Watkins & Mohr, 2011). The purpose of the workshop was reviewed, and participants were given an agenda.

Next, the socio-ecological model as it pertains to unemployment was explained and

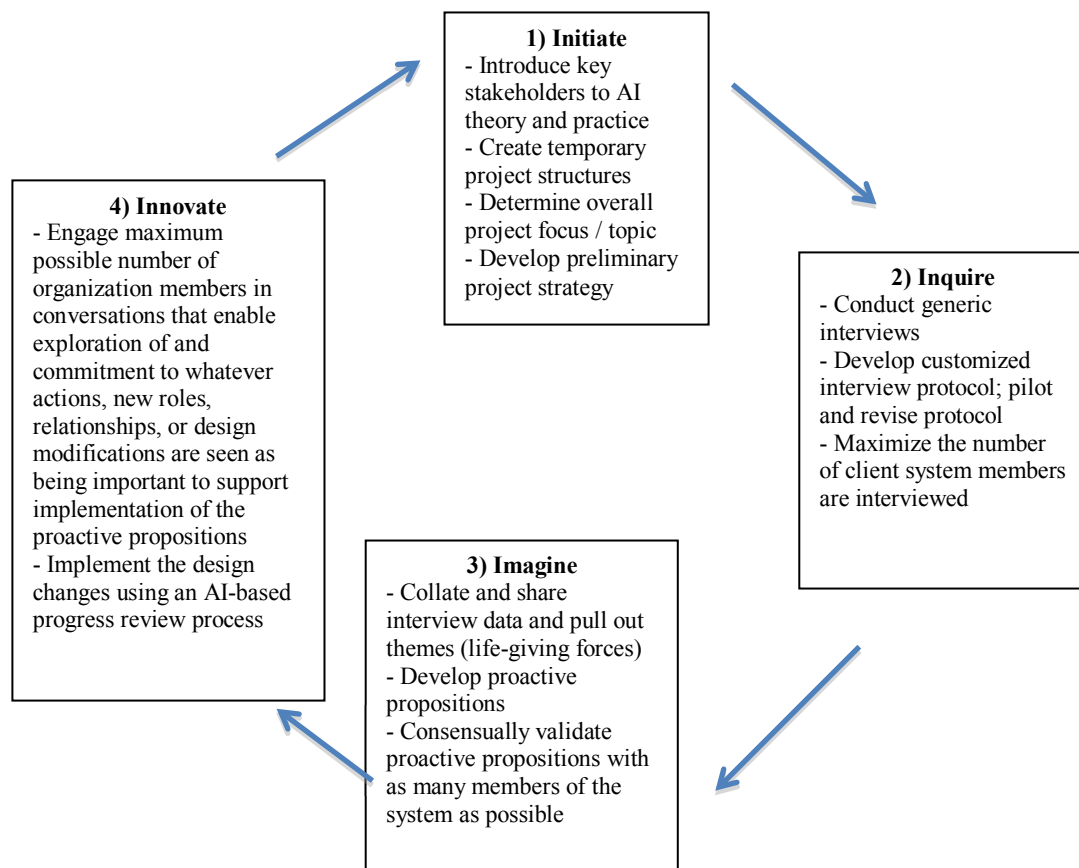


Figure 2. The 4-I Model of Appreciative Inquiry, by Watkins and Mohr (2001).

examples of interventions working at each of the levels were given. The first activity in the workshop was that the socio-ecological model in figure 1, that represent examples of the kind of interventions offered at each level of the socio-ecological model, was explained to the participants. Each level, individual, relationship, community, and society was printed and hung on a separate chart, and participants were asked to write the interventions that they might know of on sticky notes and post them at the level at which they intervene. The researchers clarified that interventions working at each level are not limited to the examples shown in figure 1. This provided participants with a visual image of the distribution of interventions across socio-economic levels. Names of interventions identified by the participants at this stage were added to the comprehensive list referred to above via AYB and additional research (see appendix C). The researcher later identified the websites of interventions in the list to serve as a resource to be used by organizations working in the field.

In the Inquire stage of the AI, which is the second stage, participants were asked to pair with partners who they have not met with before and conduct an interview with them using the AI Inquire forms (appendix D), which includes the following questions:

- 1) Tell me about a peak experience you have had in working on issues of unemployment through the program that you represent.
- 2) What are the elements that made this experience possible? (Think about your qualities, the beneficiaries, the organization you work for, the values, co-workers, the activities, the model, nature of work)
- 3) What are three wishes which you would like to see happen in your organization which would make it possible to have more peak experiences as you work to solve the problem of unemployment?

Interview forms were distributed, which asked participants to record where their interviewee worked, the activities he or she was involved in, and where their intervention(s) fell on the socio-ecological model. These forms also listed the AI questions with space for taking notes. Participants were given instructions on how to conduct the interviews. Each participant was asked to take about ten minutes to interview the other. After the interviews, a coffee break was offered and then participants broke into two groups and were given time to report on the stories from their interviews. While participants shared the stories with their group, facilitators (the researcher and her faculty advisor) wrote down the themes, which emerged from the interviews on flip charts, and confirmed each of the themes with the group. While participants had a lunch break, the themes from the two groups were combined and grouped under broader themes.

A lunch break was offered before the next stage of the AI, which is the Imagine stage. The researcher asked the participants to break into groups and think of their group as a group of organizations working together on an initiative, or as a group of staff members from one organization that works on an initiative. Participants were asked to imagine that their group was hosted on a television show with a prominent Egyptian presenter because of the achievement their initiative had shown by working with the unemployed. A paper with the list of questions that the presenter might ask them was distributed among each group, and they were asked to discuss those questions and imagine what the future of their interventions would look like, and create a vision of their future by creating a picture (see appendix E). Participants were broken into three groups and were given white charts and coloring markers to be able to create their own pictures. Each group then presented their picture to the rest of the participants, explaining what they had drawn.

In the last stage, Innovate, participants remained with their groups, and were asked to discuss the themes that were listed on the board (from the Inquire stage) and choose a theme

that they would like to set recommendations for, to bridge between the strengths identified by the Inquire themes and the visions identified by the pictures they drew in the Innovate stage (see appendix F). Each of the three groups chose one theme out of the five themes listed on the board, and came up with a list of future steps that would help the interventions develop and move forward in dealing with the problem of unemployment. Each group then presented their propositions to others. Finally, the researcher got some feedback from the participants regarding the workshop, and showed them resources that would help them use Appreciative Inquiry at their organizations, or with their communities.

Results

Data Analysis of the Initiate Stage

In the Initiate stage of the Appreciative Inquiry, participants listed the Cairo unemployment interventions that they were familiar with on the four different levels of the socio-ecological model. Interventions were listed by the name of the organization, the name of the initiative, or both. Figure 3 illustrates the number and the kinds of interventions listed by participants during the workshop on the socio-ecological model.

Participants were able to list a total of 50 interventions on the four different levels, with 12 of those interventions working at more than one level. Eighteen interventions were listed as working at the individual level, 9 of which were also listed as working at another level. There were 9 interventions listed at the relationship level, one of which was also listed as working at another level. There were 13 interventions at the community level, two of which were also working at other levels, and 10 interventions were listed at the society level. The individual level had the largest number of interventions listed, and the common services provided for the unemployed for these interventions are financial assistance, skills training, or psychological support. The next largest were interventions working at the community level, which reflects collaborations between public, private, and non-profit sector, and funding

agencies that work on facilitating, or funding initiatives working on the problem of unemployment, as well as Corporate Social Responsibility departments. Those two levels are followed by the number of interventions working at the society level, which includes funders.

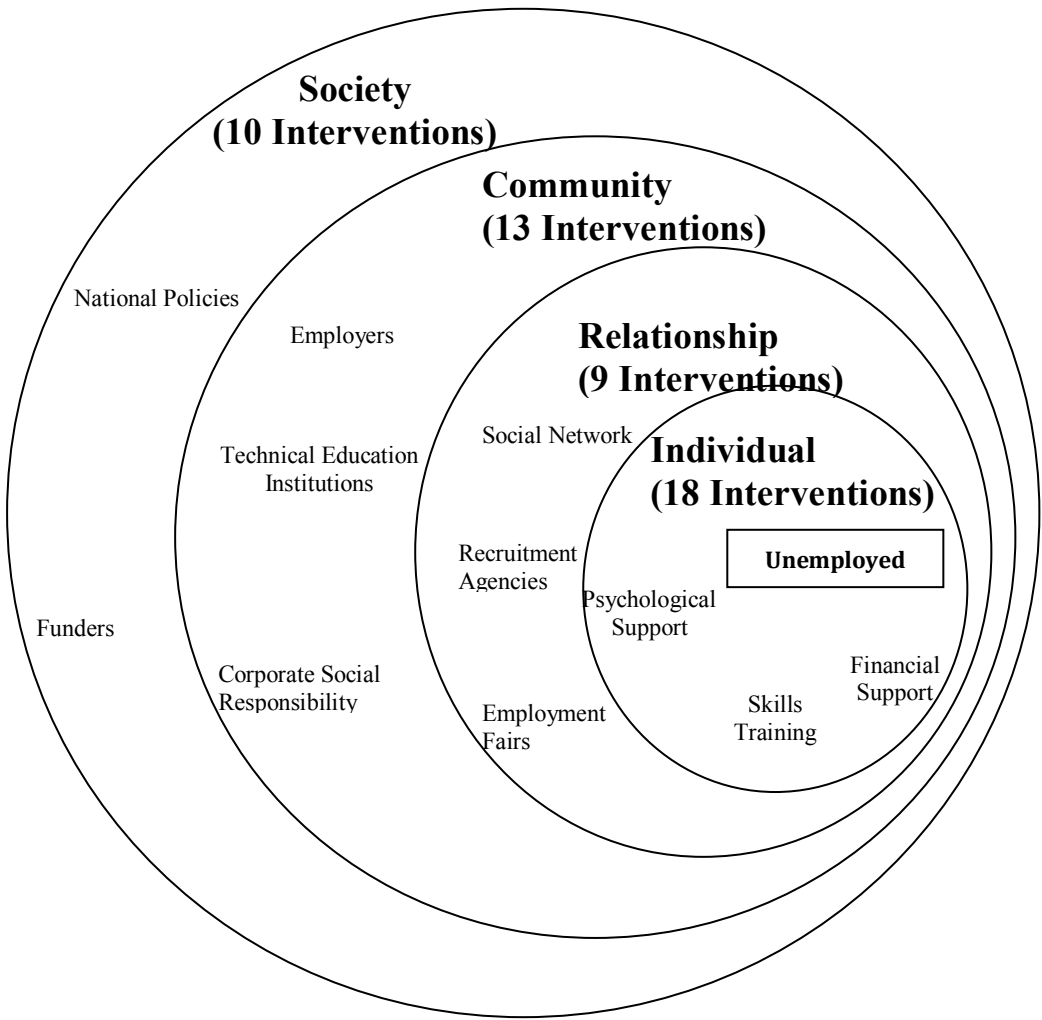


Figure 3. Numbers and kinds of interventions listed by participants at the workshop.

The fewest number of interventions listed are those working at the relationship level, these included online social networks, cultural centers that provide social support, and employment fairs held by recruitment agencies. Participants also listed different types of interventions other than the ones presented on the socio-ecological model explained to them at this stage. Those are recruitment agencies that enhance the relationship between the unemployed and the employers, at the relationship level, and collaborations between

corporate social responsibility departments and non-governmental organizations, at the community level.

Data Analysis of the Inquire and Imagine Stages

Qualitative data were analyzed using inductive content analysis, which is commonly used in various fields such as nursing and psychology and business, and is used to categorize data into related categories, understand data within their context, and provide an alternative perspective to have a practical guide for action (Elo & Kyngas, 2008). Elo and Kyngas (2008) explained that there are three steps of conducting an inductive content analysis, which are: (1) preparation, through which the researcher extracts themes from the content; (2) organizing, through which the researcher groups data into categories and sub-categories; and (3) reporting, through which the researcher reports and describes the data categories. Content analysis was similarly used in a study using the first two stages of Appreciative Inquiry (AI) to identify the strengths of students to improve learning strategies in a high school in the United States (San Maartin & Calabrese, 2011). In this study, the preparation and organizing of the data extracted from the Inquire stage were done during the workshop by the facilitators (the researcher and her faculty advisor), while preparation and organizing of the Imagine and Innovate stages were done by research after the workshop. In addition, researcher did the reporting for all stages after the workshop.

In the Inquire stage, participants were given the chance to interview each other and share the strengths, as well as their wishes, for the initiative they represented. The three questions of the inquiry interview were phrased in a positive way, designed to reveal the strengths of the interventions participating in the workshop. Through reflecting on participants' stories and sharing their experiences, what emerges is the success and strengths of the organizations, and it highlights the best of what is in those organizations.

Thus, themes that were extracted out of the interviews in the Inquiry stage of the Appreciative Inquiry are considered the strengths available in current interventions working with unemployment in Cairo. These themes are clustered around five main themes: (1) having a clear vision for interventions, (2) establishing relationships and networks between interventions, (3) changing attitudes available in the society that influence employability of individuals, (4) training provided to beneficiaries, and (5) quality of staff and programs offered.

Under having a clear vision for interventions, participants discussed their wish for setting a common ground that interventions can work on, and having an overall vision that identifies the effectiveness of the programs working with unemployment. Participants also expressed their wish for having identified national goals for unemployment, having a strategic plan developed by the top levels of government, having effective, clear, and stable policies that ensure effective practice for non-governmental organizations, and having less bureaucracy and more support from the government. Also, they expressed their need for a clearer understanding of the types of programs currently offered and of the types of programs needed, and the desire for a needs assessment and gap analysis of the job market. This better understanding would make it possible to have programs that are more responsive to the market needs and better serve the program's beneficiaries. Other ideas were having initiatives designed to work across different levels of the socio-ecological model (vertical expansion), and initiative expansion to a larger population (horizontal expansion).

Under establishing relationships and networks between interventions, participants discussed linkages between organizations implementing programs serving unemployment, industry, the private sector, and governmental institutions. They also discussed creating collaboration between different entities to develop the integration of services.

Participants spoke about changing attitudes in the society that influence employability of individuals through raising awareness and changing the stigma about blue-collar work, people with disabilities, and employee attitudes toward work. Also, they mentioned raising awareness of human resource and corporate social responsibility departments to change the criteria of jobs that is based on certificates. In addition, they advocated for changing the placement system in education and matching the job qualifications to skills and interests, instead of certificates.

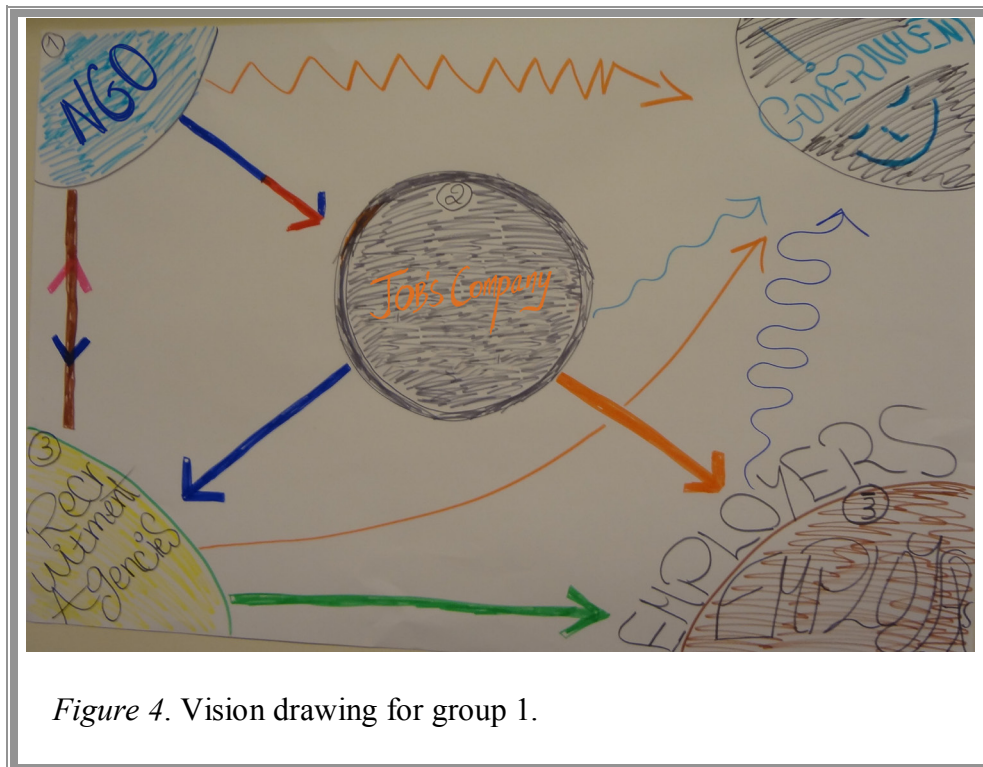
Participants discussed themes related to training, saying that it was important to meet needs of beneficiaries, having flexibility in curriculum development, and program designs that address both local and international markets. They also discussed having effective training material and resources, introducing hands-on and cultural exchange learning to beneficiaries, improving the assessment of skills, providing a mentoring system, providing training that empowers beneficiaries, and outreach to a wide diversity of participants.

Finally, participants discussed the quality of staff and programs offered by their interventions. They spoke of having staff that have problem solving skills and expertise, and who are passionate, helpful, caring, motivated, confident, open-minded and believe in the cause they work for. They also discussed the quality of their programs, mentioning reaching out to a wide range of participants, leaving an impact on the community they work with, addressing new areas of needs, as well as flexibility to meet needs. They talked about the need for following up on participants and evaluation of activities, having access to resources that ensure sustainability of programs and providing more funding for programs, being able to communicate the achievements and accomplishments of the programs, having effective management, having a clear vision and mission, and building the capacity of program and staff.

The first three themes mentioned: (1) having a clear vision for interventions, (2) establishing relationships and networks between interventions, and (3) changing attitudes available in the society are themes that involve the interaction between interventions and reflect collaborative work and efforts. The other two themes, training and quality of staff and program, are more related to individual efforts regarding how programs are designed, implemented, and administered within each organization or intervention. However, the latter themes could be seen happening as a result of the efforts exerted from the former themes.

In the Imagine stage of the Appreciative Inquiry, participants were able to envision the future of interventions on unemployment through creating their own picture, which they worked on in groups. There were three groups, and each group members created a drawing (see figures 4, 5, and 6 for drawing of group 1, 2, and 3 respectively). The three figures show that all three groups created drawings in the form of flow charts, with circles representing different entities and joined them by arrows or lines, or explained them in a way that was interactive. All drawings reflect the participants' vision to work in a more comprehensive, interconnected way. This is also shown by the explanation each group gave about their drawing.

Group 1 envisioned their interventions as providing professional and standardized skills for people with disabilities, including them in the labor market by linking them to employers, enforcing policies that ensure their inclusion, sharing their resources with other interventions working in the field, and revisiting policies according to the changes that occur in the society.



Group 2 envisioned their intervention to be at the national level. This intervention would include an overall vision for unemployment programs, utilizing, assessing, and distributing human assets according to skills, empowering individuals with knowledge and skills, competing with local and international market, and aligning all entities together.

Group 3 envisioned their intervention to have an overall vision, providing professional and standardized skills and accredited certifications, building capacity of organizations, meeting community needs and revisiting initiatives, raising awareness of Corporate Social Responsibility and collaboration with them, and changing attitudes and behaviors of individuals toward work.

There are themes that are common among the three groups, given their explanation of their drawing. The most common theme is empowering individuals with knowledge, skills, and providing equal opportunities, which is mentioned six times, followed by collaboration, which is mentioned five times, and flexibility to meet community needs, which is mentioned

three times. Other themes are raising awareness, having an overall vision, inclusion, sharing resources, advocacy, and capacity building.

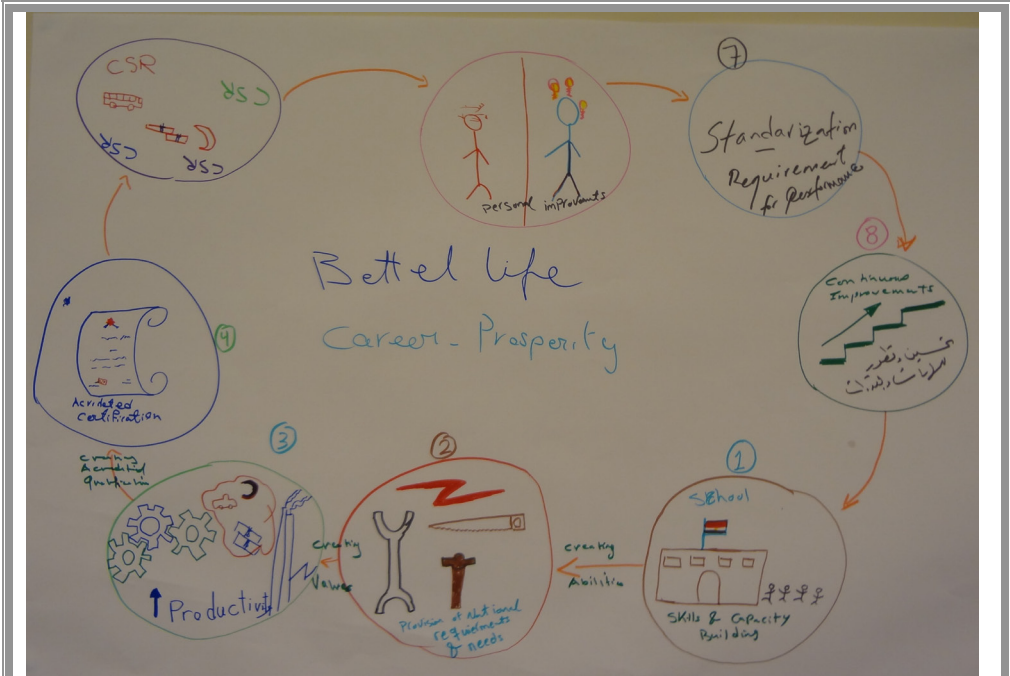


Figure 5. Vision drawing for group 2.

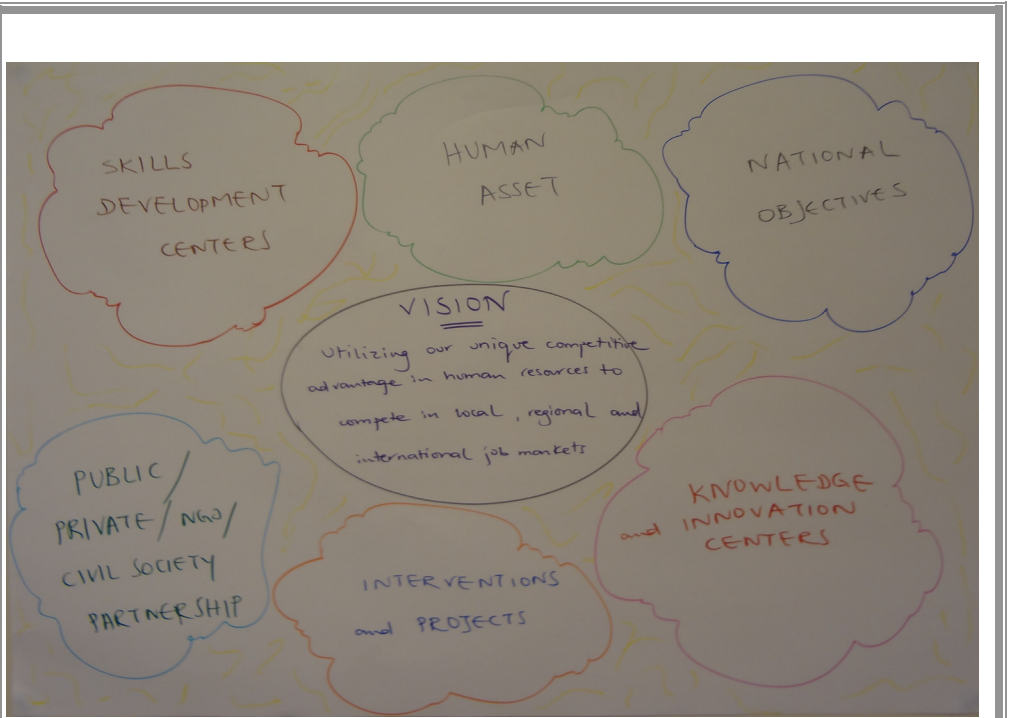


Figure 6. Vision drawing for group 3.

Data from the Innovate Stage

In the Innovate stage of the Appreciative Inquiry, each group of participants chose one theme that emerged from the Inquire stage and developed a plan that would enable them to reach their vision in their drawings. Out of the five themes, only three were chosen because there were only three groups available; the three groups chose to make suggestions for having a clear vision for interventions, establishing relationships and networks for interventions, and providing training for beneficiaries.

Having a clear vision. Data from participants' suggestions highlighted the necessity of having clear visions for all interventions to work under, which allows interventions to have clear vision and work towards achieving it.

- Conduct a needs assessment of production and service providers in order to identify the labor market needs, understand the problems they face, what skills are needed, what resources are available, and what might be needed in the future.
- Share results of the needs assessment with governmental institutions in order to promote collaboration with the private, public and non-profit sectors to facilitate the development, investment, and productivity of employers.
- Increase the efficiency of the workers and increase wages and incentives.
- Have clear effective policies, and ensure quality assurance.
- Provide monitoring and evaluation.
- Create competition between different employers through establishing a reward system for effective initiatives.

Establish relationships and networks. Data from participants' suggestions revealed themes around the importance of creating networks, coordination, and collaboration between different entities dealing with unemployment.

- Have an entity take the initiative to coordinate between different interventions.

- Identify interventions working in the field to help solve the problem of unemployment.
- Create a database with all entities intervening to solve unemployment, with a description of the initiatives and activities implemented at each.
- Unify the overall vision of all entities working in the field.
- Network with companies and conduct needs assessment for them and assess their capacity.
- Coordinate collaboration between different entities.
- Conduct regular conferences with all parties.
- Publish annual reports about different issues in the field, disseminate, and discuss with different stakeholders.
- Create a social media tool that integrates all entities to connect and share experiences

Providing training. Data from participants' suggestions revealed themes around being able to provide better quality of training to beneficiaries.

- Provide individuals with career guidance so that they can explore their qualifications.
- Assess individuals' abilities and provide trainings that match their abilities.
- Provide individuals with skills that would help them find suitable jobs and present themselves.
- Utilize resources and technology to provide efficient training to individuals.
- Provide trainers with trainings that would make use of their abilities.
- Establish training centers across diversified regions in Egypt.
- Providing awards based on success to encourage individuals for training.

The three themes chosen by the intervention representatives present a plan for interventions to work in a more comprehensive manner, improve program effectiveness and

build capacity of staff, and establish collaborative relationships that ensure sharing resources, experiences, goals between interventions.

Discussion

The qualitative data derived from the first, second, and third stages of the Appreciative Inquiry, the Initiate, Inquire and Imagine stages, highlights the distribution of interventions on the socio-ecological model, the strengths available in interventions, and the vision created by members working in those interventions. The categories of themes and sub-categories that underlie them can be used to assess the effectiveness of the current interventions in terms of what is there and the potential available for interventions to achieve their visions. This can be done by analyzing the themes using the four factors of effective interventions described by Nation, Wandersman, and Perkins (2002), which are comprehensiveness, empowerment, identification and utilization of assets, and sustainability. Table 2 summarizes how themes from the Inquire and Imagine stage of the Appreciative Inquiry, which reflects the strengths available in the interventions currently working with unemployment and their vision, are analyzed in terms of the four factors of an effective intervention. It is clear that these themes mostly revolved around the factors of comprehensiveness and sustainability. There are common themes that serve both purposes of the two factors as well. Interventions seem to have more potential and desire to be comprehensive and sustainable, although organization and coordination of efforts is also recognized as a need. However, to increase effectiveness of interventions, there needs to be focus on building the capacity of organizations to empower their communities, and having strong relationship with the communities they work with, evaluating programs using an empowering approach, and being able to conduct assessments to map the assets in the communities they work with.

| Table 2 <i>Matching Themes with Factors of Effective Interventions by (Nation, Wandersman, & Perkins, 2002).</i> | | |
|---|---|---|
| Factor of Effective Interventions | Strengths | Vision |
| Comprehensiveness | Having an overall vision for all interventions to achieve | Identify national goals |
| | Have initiatives work at different levels of the socio-ecological model | Develop a strategic plan |
| | Collaboration between non-profit, public, and private sector | Ensure effective policies for non-governmental organizations |
| | | Horizontal and vertical expansion of initiatives |
| | | Establish relationships and networks between different sectors |
| | | Linking the quality of education offered, the training provided, and the job market |
| Empowerment | | Evaluation of programs |
| | | Capacity building of program and staff |
| Identification and Utilization of Resources | | Communicate the achievements and accomplishments of the program |
| | Utilize, assess, distribute human assets according to skills | Share their resources with other interventions |
| Sustainability | | Have more access to funding |
| | Collaboration with corporate social responsibility departments | Support from government |
| | | Collaboration between entities |
| | | Connecting charity and development efforts |

Comprehensiveness

Strengths of interventions that were identified by the participants seemed to match the first factor of effective interventions, which is the comprehensiveness. This factor suggests that effective interventions work at multi-levels of the system and address different levels of the socio-ecological model (Nation et al., 2002). With unemployment, it is especially

important to take a comprehensive approach because it generally is insufficient to intervene only on one level. Data from the Initiate stage of this study show that 24%, 12 out of 50, interventions were listed to be working at more than one level of the socio-ecological model, and most of them were the interventions listed at the individual level. When comparing this percentage to the percentage from the previous study of youth unemployment that was done on a larger sample of interventions around the world (Betcherman et al., 2007), it is lower. The fact that the factor of comprehensiveness is more common in interventions listed by participants at the individual level, such as interventions providing training for individuals, but is not common at the other levels could be related to the kind of services provided at the individual level. Providing training, for example, might require that the intervention implements another kind of activity that would help the trained individuals use the skills he/she learns, through providing them with employment opportunities, which falls under a different level. It could also be that implementers find that their programs have stronger impact, when they intervene at different levels other than that of the individual. This interpretation is compatible with the findings from the Youth Employment Inventory by Betcherman et al. (2007).

In addition, themes from the Inquire stage, such as having an overall vision and establishing relationships and networks between interventions reveal that participants felt that it was vital to implement comprehensive interventions. The sub-categories of (1) having employment initiatives working across different levels of the society, (2) identifying common goals, (3) moving toward vertical and horizontal expansion of programs, and (4) achieving collaboration and integration between different entities, and services, all require a comprehensive approach. Other sub-categories such as addressing local and international market needs and having a strategic plan that is developed from effective policy reflect the idea that interventions need to address the problem of unemployment in socio-ecological

context that ensures interaction between different levels. This theme illustrates the idea that working on policies, which is on the societal level, influences the effectiveness of strategically implementing interventions at the other levels.

Participants wished that there was a stronger link between the quality and type of education offered to individuals in schools, the type of the training provided by interventions, and the job opportunities available in the employment market, suggesting the need for a more comprehensive approach to implementing interventions. The integration of capacities of different organizations available in different sectors and levels is important for the effectiveness of solving complex problems such as unemployment. Huppe, Creech, and Knoblauch (2012) for example, suggest that governance networks can be an essential tool that not only brings resources together, but also results in the collaboration that ensures sharing experiences, knowledge, and transforms conflicts between the public sector, private sector, and civil society into fruitful collaboration. This leads to having more sustainable interventions and helps in creating an overall vision. Although collaborative efforts are available among the strengths of the current interventions, the network needs to be more organized and coordinated through governance networks to increase sustainability and effectiveness of interventions. As mentioned in the vision of one group of the participants, sharing resources between different entities, such as database of beneficiaries, highlights the need for interventions to collaborate and share resources together to better serve beneficiaries.

Empowerment

Data show that strengths of the interventions working with unemployment include the fact that they are able to reach out to diverse communities. Other themes around providing access to information are empowering beneficiaries with knowledge, and skills through training to gain mastery over them, and be able to start their career and ensure employment,

being able to meet actual and common needs of beneficiaries, and having effective training material and resources. Thus, the factor of empowerment here is more related to empowering individuals through providing them quality services than to supporting grassroots movements. Although the empowerment factor is not available in interventions, they might have the potential and need to implement this approach but they lack knowledge about this area.

Matching the data with the empowerment factor reveals that capacity of interventions working with unemployment in Egypt needs to be built on how to adopt an empowering approach while implementing their interventions. Empowerment is defined by Nation et al. (2002) as empowering communities through grass-root involvement, citizen participation, and collaboration with community members, which lead to building the organizational capacity. The only theme that was related to this definition of empowerment was being able to ensure quality of services provided and effectiveness of activities, by following up with beneficiaries and being flexible to change their activities according to the communities' needs. However, it was also unclear how this might be done in a structured and empowering way that ensures community members and beneficiaries' participation.

Empowerment is a very broad concept that involves many definitions. According to the World Bank, "empowerment is the expansion of assets and capabilities of poor people to participate in, negotiate with, influence, control, and hold accountable institutions that affect their lives" (The World Bank, 2002, p. 11). The definition provided by the World Bank differs from the one provided above, as it is more relevant to empowering individuals by offering them good quality of services, rather than adopting an empowering approach that ensures their participation. The definition of empowerment by the World Bank explains factors that need to occur in the interventions that are currently running to ensure they empower the communities they work with. The World Bank (2002) explains four factors of

empowerment that are access to information, inclusion and participation, accountability, and local organizational capacity. Having access to information could be relevant to the themes obtained from the data. Being able to provide information of services and assets available in communities to the beneficiaries is a crucial factor, that empowers individuals because if they do not know which resources are available for them when they are unemployed, they will be deprived from the services provided and will not be empowered.

Identification and Utilization of Resources

Data from the interventions' visions reveal that communicating the achievements and accomplishments of interventions together and sharing their resources with other interventions, which could be considered an asset of shared experiences, is needed. Another theme was to utilize, assess, and distribute human assets according to skills. They referred to a need for creating a databank, to have more access to resources, in general. Thus, it is necessary for interventions to map assets in the communities they work with so that they can maximize their utilization. Participating in the workshop helped participants identify resources because they were able to network and to get introduced to other interventions. Identification and utilization of resources as a factor of effective interventions is defined by Nation et al. (2002) as being able to identify, map, develop, and use the different kinds of assets available in the community.

Sustainability

Data from the Initiate stage show that, at the community level, participants listed five interventions that are Corporate Social Responsibility departments of multi-national companies, who collaborate, cooperate, or partner with interventions working at other levels to sustain the development of the programs or initiatives taking place. In addition, at the society level, nine out of the ten interventions listed at this level work as funders for interventions working to solve the problem of unemployment. This data reveal that there

exists collaboration that supports the sustainability of unemployment interventions in Cairo. It is also clear from the themes in the Inquire stage such as collaboration between entities and integration of services offered by interventions, that they help ensure sustainability of interventions working, which is considered strength. This data confirms the presence of the factor of sustainability in interventions, which is becoming economically stable, through achieving self-sustainability, and gaining political and social support (Nation et al., 2002). However, under the theme of having a clear vision, the sub-category of providing more funding for interventions suggests that some programs may not be currently sustainable. In addition, under establishing relationships and network between interventions, one of the sub-categories is connecting charity and development efforts by different interventions. There are many interventions providing charitable work, and establishing networks between interventions and charitable organizations might help ensure sustainability by increasing the pool of funders available for interventions working on the problem of unemployment.

A Vision for the Future

This section examines the most crucial part of the data, which are the suggestions of the participants, for future practice, to be able to bridge the strengths available in their interventions to the visions they created. Suggestions were given at three different areas that need development, (1) having an overall vision for interventions, (2) establishing relationship and network for interventions, and (3) providing better training to improve the employability of individuals. The suggestions made mainly revolve around collaboration, providing efficient training, and sharing an overall vision.

Data from the Initiate stage of the Appreciative Inquiry workshop revealed that out of the 50 interventions listed, only one organization works at all levels of the socio-ecological model, which is a governmental institution. Expanding the remaining programs into comprehensive efforts would be challenging and expensive. The obvious solution is to adopt

collaborative solutions or approaches. In a non-collaborative approach, each intervention is immersed in intervening at one level to solving their problems that exist at this specific level, while missing out on many other assets that could be shared with other interventions through collaboration. Collaborative solutions have the potential to bring all interventions together and make them focus on sharing their assets, building toward a more comprehensive approach (Wolff, 2010).

Collaborative solutions can create a holistic approach instead of fragmentation, which is dealing with each problem of a community separately, and in a way that does not capture the interrelatedness between different problems. For example, as mentioned in the literature the challenges faced by the technical education and vocational training reform in Egypt occur at different levels of the system, such as cultural obsession with certificates, unmet needs of the labor market (Krapp, 1999), and policy changes (Nasr, 2010; TVET Programme, 2007). Although this kind of reform focuses on the community level, other interventions need to focus on raising awareness to change the stigma about technical and vocational education as being non-prestigious.

If the intervention is not comprehensive and fails to address the interrelatedness between different aspects of the problem, then no matter how well interventions develop technical institutions, it will still be seen as non-prestigious and will hinder the reform. This then influences another factor, which is the productivity of industries that hire graduates of technical institutes. Moreover, without collaboration between the technical institutes and the employers in the labor market, students will lack the hands-on training that would allow them to gain skills that meets the labor market needs. This interdependence between levels of intervention is a key factor in an ecological framework; changes in one part of the system lead to changes in other systems (Campbell et al., 2010). Solving the problem in small pieces does not allow for comprehensiveness and fails to take into account the context of

unemployment. The suggestions made by the participants at the workshop reflect this point as they suggested that they identify interventions working in the field to help solve the problem of unemployment, and create a database with all entities intervening to solve the problem, with a description of the initiatives and activities implemented at each. Participants also felt the need to unify the overall vision of all entities working in the field so that separate efforts would align with one another, establish relationships with the private sector, and conduct needs assessments to understand their capacities. The first two suggestions were partially achieved through the workshop, as a preliminary database has been created, outlining some of the available interventions that work with unemployment. In addition, participants suggested that it was key to assess individuals' abilities, provide trainings that match their abilities, and help them find suitable jobs. These suggestions require the involvement of several stakeholders or interventions in order to achieve this outcome. For example, a career counseling center is required to conduct the necessary assessment to identify the abilities of the individual, and an intervention that provides the assigned training is needed to implement this part of the process, and finally, a recruitment agency is needed to link the individual to the employers that need the skills learned.

It is clear from the participants' suggestions that they are more concerned and focused on the fact that interventions need to coordinate and identify assets and be able to utilize them, and align efforts done by interventions. Wolff (2010) also mentions that collaborative solutions provide effective and accessible communication between interventions, instead of having limited information; provide coordination instead of duplication of efforts; cooperation instead of competition; prevention instead of crisis orientation; citizen driven interventions instead of ones driven by bureaucracies; focus on assets instead of deficits; integrate formal and informal helping networks instead of excessive professionalism; and

align the goals of the people working at interventions with their processes, instead of losing their purposes.

Participants are willing to learn skills that would allow them to use the power of collaboration, as they suggested that they want to have an entity that takes the initiative to coordinate between different interventions, conduct regular conferences with all parties, publish annual reports about different issues in the field to disseminate and discuss with different stakeholders, and to create a social media tool that integrates all entities to connect and share experiences. The suggestions made by the participants that would serve that field is very crucial in being able to collaborate; however, finding an entity that can allocate the required resources to bring interventions together might also require that different organizations, including a governmental one, collaborate to achieve the suggested outcomes.

The upcoming United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development in Brazil focuses on cross-sectorial collaboration between governmental, non-governmental organizations, private industries, and community members (Rosen, 2012). Rosen (2012) argues that ignoring the cross-sectorial collaborations result in a collective loss for all parties, as there are resources and potential that is wasted in developing countries. Wolff (2010) outlines six key principles for collaborative solutions. The first principle is encouraging true collaboration as the form of change, and this includes applying true collaboration that builds on networking, coordination, and cooperation. Himmelman (2001) defines networking as exchanging information; coordination as exchanging information and modifying activities for the same benefit; cooperation as exchanging information, modifying activities, and sharing resources to meet common goal; and collaboration as building on those three concepts, to include exchanging information, modifying activities, sharing resources, and enhancing capacity of another organization by sharing risk, responsibilities, rewards, and resources, meaning being accountable for all. Collaboration cannot be successful unless it includes

networking, coordination, and cooperation between its members. Without networking, implementers of interventions will be unable to connect their beneficiaries to resources, while coordination uses resources efficiently to meet community needs, and cooperation brings interventions under a shared goal. For effective collaboration, professionals should not get together to discuss issues and make decisions, without taking actions, or involving the communities they work with (Rosen, 2012). Wolff (2001) suggests that the most successful community coalitions are those that work on establishing relationships with community members, with which they will work and mobilize.

Participants made suggestions that would help interventions move towards a more collaborative approach, and that could be implemented through building a coalition, as coalitions promote collaboration, but they did not mention coalition as part of their suggestions. They were more focused on the steps that would allow more collaboration, and not how those steps could be implemented. In March 2011, after the January 25 revolution, Nahdet ElMahrousa, and Egyptian non-governmental organization, cohosted a roundtable was conducted to provide recommendations to adopt a multi-stakeholder approach to Egypt's development (The Brookings Institution, 2011). Among the recommendations were support coalition building and networking between civil society associations, support coalitions and reforms, evaluate and replicate successful initiatives, and improve public awareness in media and support civic engagement in education. This roundtable suggests the opportunities available in post-revolutionary Egypt. It encourages educational reform, in terms of curricula development and replication of social entrepreneurship programs, which requires collaboration with different entities. It is inferred from this roundtable that there are more opportunities for collaboration between different sectors, after the revolution. Building a coalition was not mentioned by any of the participants at the workshop.

This factor of utilization of resources is also addressed by the participants' suggestions. They suggested conducting needs assessment of production and service providers in order to identify the labor market needs, understand the problems they face, what skills are needed, what resources are available, and what might be needed in the future, and utilizing resources and technology to provide efficient training to individuals. Participants want to assess the assets available in the community and make best use of them. The second principle of collaborative solutions by Wolff (2010) is to employ an ecological approach that builds on community assets. This is also identified as one of the factors of an ecological framework, which is distribution of resources- the way resources are identified and utilized within a community helps understand how the community functions (Duncan et al., 2007; Kloos et al., 2012).

It is shown in the drawings of the groups of participants in the Imagine stage that there is a common vision that they wish to work under; their drawings implied that they want something to gather around. The third principle of collaborative solutions is to take action by addressing issues of social change and power on the basis of having a common vision. In this principle, the level of involvement between interventions goes beyond networking and coordination and works on having a common purpose, being able to utilize the resources to achieve the intended goal. In networking and coordination, there is a mutual benefit; however, in cooperation and collaboration, there is a common goal or purpose or vision that brings together all interested parties. Thus, applying cooperation and collaboration, involves more challenges as people have different interests and to agree on a common vision, a lot of discussion would need to happen and agreement on the goals is necessary so that interventions could implement activities that would impose change in the problem of unemployment, and eventually reach their common vision.

Building coalitions promote collaboration, as it is defined by Brown (1984) as “an organization of diverse interest groups that combine their human and material resources to effect a specific change the members are unable to bring about independently” (as cited in Kaye & Wolff, 2002). Wolff (2001) stated that a clear mission and vision should be developed for coalitions to work efficiently. Community coalitions can impose change; nevertheless, it tends to exclude community members from planning, implementation, and participation; thus it is necessary to include community members in coalitions (Wolff, 2010).

In fact, South Africa’s experience after their revolution could be used as an example here, as South Africa is considered one of the successful examples of democratic transitions (Youth Development Network, 2004). Their lessons learned from dealing with the problem of unemployment includes involving stakeholders and youth in designing and implementing their programs, applying an asset-based approach, providing suitable training and skills development, maintaining quality of programs, and demonstrating sustainability of programs. Thus, building a coalition for interventions working with unemployment in Cairo, as well as focusing on asset-based approaches, and monitoring and evaluation of programs or initiatives, would bring the collaborative solution into practice and would facilitate the suggestion set by the participants of the Appreciative Inquiry workshop for this research.

Applying a Socio-ecological Framework

Conducting the Appreciative Inquiry (AI) workshop was a first step towards a collaborative approach to deal with the problem of unemployment, considering the socio-ecological model; below are recommendations for future steps that would help the participants of the workshop, as well as other participants move forward:

- 1) *Develop a collaborative leadership that would be willing to take the initiative and lead the process.* Taking leadership requires resources, such as funding, as well as ability to facilitate groups, expertise, ensure empowerment of communities, and

participation of all stakeholders. The leadership could also be two or more different entities that are willing to collaborate to take the initiative, write a proposal and allocate resources. Non-governmental organizations that work on building capacities of NGOs and governmental institutions that deal with NGO's, might be willing and might have the capacity to take the initiative. However, it is recommended that a follow up meeting is held to discuss the outcomes and recommendations of the AI workshop, and invitations should be extended to other participants, and not only the ones who attended the workshop.

- 2) *Use the list of interventions from this research (see appendix C), as a database and conduct further research to compile more interventions.* The list contains interventions listed by participants who attended the AI workshop and interventions that were listed prior to the workshop to be sent invitations to participate in the workshop.
- 3) *Build a coalition for interventions dealing with unemployment by explaining to organizations the importance of coalition, and their roles as members of the coalition.* There are barriers that might exist while handling coalitions, which need to be addressed. Kaye and Wolff (2002) discuss barriers that could arise in coalitions; some of which could arise in the recommended coalition. Barriers that could be faced in building the coalition could be related to funding. It would be necessary to find a source of funding that would pay for the staff managing and administering the coalition, meetings held, and research or assessments conducted in the community. Poor links to the community could be another one of the barriers faced because it might be difficult to include community members in coalition meetings. Thus it is important to enhance the capacity of interventions to include community members in decision-making and implementation of their activities so that these important voices

would be brought to the meetings. Finally, conflicts between coalition members could be a huge barrier as they might have different interests; this makes it necessary for all members to get involved in discussions to be able to reduce conflicts. Since interventions participating in the coalition address different levels of the problem of unemployment, members might have different interests, which might result in conflicts either due to difference in background, or approach adopted, or any other area of difference. Although one of the purposes of the coalition is to have one vision for all interventions, each intervention would still have its own mission, which could also cause conflicts to arise.

- 4) *Hold meetings to come up with a common vision* for the coalition, develop a strategic plan for interventions to move forward, coordinate the work, and create cooperation and collaboration between interventions to reach their vision.
- 5) *Conduct an assessment of the nature of interventions and implemented activities, and map assets of the communities they work with.* Further community assessments need to be done to study more the nature of interventions, community needs, employer needs, through using tools such AI, and community asset mapping, which is an inventory created to help organizations identify assets in local communities that can provide services, support, or funds (U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, n.d.). Using an asset-based approach helps to avoid being trapped in the dilemma of being focused on the deficits, which tends to drain energy and does not allow organizations to maximize the utilization of assets.
- 6) *Build capacity of members of the coalition.*
 - *Evaluate the efficiency of the running programs*, using participatory evaluation, which is engaging stakeholders, in this case the staff working at the intervention and their beneficiaries, in the process of evaluation (Cox, Keener, Woodard, &

Wandersman, 2009). This will help the coalition gain an understanding of current programs and their impact on different stakeholders, and will also serve to involve stakeholders in the coalition.

- *Involve community members.* Nation et al. (2003) described strategies and components that make an intervention efficient; these are summed up in strengthening the relationship between community members and their systems, having a program that is culturally sensitive, conducting outcome as well as process evaluation, and using a collaborative approach to while intervening in a community. The collaborative approach in prevention encourages the involvement of stakeholders, including service providers and community members in the process of designing and evaluating an intervention program. Checkoway (1995) described different forms of community change such as social action, empowerment of community members through their participation, policy, advocacy, service development; all of which should act strategically to ensure efficiency in promoting change. Citizens' participation is the most powerful form of community change. One of the major characteristics of empowerment is that it builds on the strengths of the community, and helps the community to be dependent on its members instead of depending on experts (Zimmer, 2000). Thus, building capacity of interventions would increase their effectiveness by seeking empowerment through community participation.

- *Provide trainings, conduct workshop, and hold conferences* for unemployment interventions working with communities on how to conduct participatory evaluation and implement grass-root projects.

- *Create a network for interventions* working with unemployment that compiles interventions working in the field and description of activities implemented, and create a blog for interventions to post and share experiences, reports, and

opportunities that allows access to resources. This would foster the interaction of interventions with one another.

Limitations

Since this study is Appreciative Inquiry (AI)-driven, the generalizability of the results of this study is limited because the focus was solely on interventions that participated in the workshop, and they were chosen using non-probability sampling. Participation in the workshop depended on participants' willingness to attend and their schedules. However, findings lead to recommendations that suggest a collaborative and empowering approach while intervening to deal with unemployment, which could be used as a model to implement with other interventions.

Finally, this study has used a nontraditional tool of measuring assets based on a socio-ecological model in Cairo, which is AI. While conducting the workshop, the research asked the participants if they are aware of AI, and none of them had heard of it. Since AI appears to be relatively new in Egypt, it is necessary to discuss its application in Egypt so that it would be easier for others who wish to try it. First, it was not possible to conduct the four stages of the Appreciative Inquiry in a one-day workshop. It needed two days to implement the Initiate and Inquire stages in the first day, and the Imagine and Innovate stage in the second day. As the workshop is considered a suitable place for participants to network, and it was also among the objectives of the workshop, it is likely that participants would engage in discussions about the interventions they represent, while conducting the interviews. It was a very good activity that helped participants to network and share experiences; however, it takes longer than the expected time, which was 10 minutes for each interview. In the Inquire stage, the researcher passed on interview forms so that participants can take notes, which could be used in data analysis. This did not work very well, as most of the notes were unclear, and some interview forms were not filled in with information. Therefore, data from

interview forms were excluded from data analysis. Another issue is that participants were unable to grasp how to write proactive propositions, which is considered the most challenging part of AI as it requires conceptual effort to link between themes that emerged and visions (Preskill & Catsambas, 2006). Participants were not able to phrase the proactive propositions in affirmative and active statements. More time might allow the researcher to work with them on rephrasing them so that participants can feel that they are in the present tense and can actually happen. However, another challenge might arise if the workshop is conducted on two days, as participants might not be able to leave their jobs for two days, given the number of invitees that apologized to attend due to other commitments. The challenges faced at this workshop do not seem to be caused due to cultural differences related to its application in Egypt, as similar challenges have been reported in other regions (e.g., Preskill & Catsambas, 2006). Other challenges related to language might arise if Appreciative inquiry is translated; however, at this workshop, participants were bi-lingual, and understanding the material that facilitated the workshop activities at each stage was clear.

Practical Implications

In general, it was a positive experience, and the highlight of the workshop was when the researcher received feedback from participants, at the end of the workshop. They found it interesting, different in the kind of activities that were introduced, and most importantly that they realized how all participants working at different levels align under common themes and their needs were very close to each other, despite the fact that they work at different levels and serve different communities. Finally, participants were interested in taking the outcomes of the workshop and taking a step forward to make it effective. This provides some evidence that the AI format does help build momentum and generate enthusiasm. It also highlights the value of bringing interventions working to solve the problem of unemployment together and assessing their strengths.

This study works as a step towards participatory action research, which involves stakeholders. Outcomes of the research can be used by current interventions to identify some of the assets available in Cairo for interventions working with the problem of unemployment. It also provides support for donors to focus on coordinating efforts between interventions, integrate services, and enhance collaboration. Once a coalition is established, and its outcomes are evaluated, if it is found to be effective, it could be used as a model to be applied for different interventions working in different fields.

Future Directions

For further research, another Appreciative Inquiry workshop could be conducted on a larger scale to match its results with the results of this study, and identify further strengths that could be used. This study was not limited to assessing a particular population in which the interventions dealing with unemployment are serving; however, further research can focus on specific populations such as youth or women. An assessment to measure the willingness of interventions and organizations working with the problem of unemployment to be a member of a coalition, and their expectations of their participation would also be useful.

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Appendix A

English Version Consent Form

Consent form:

Project Title: Appreciative Inquiry Workshop – Alashanek Ya Balady

Principal Investigator: Hana Fahmy, e-mail: hanaemad@aucegypt.edu

You are being asked to participate in a research study. The purpose of the research is to identify the assets of interventions dealing with the problem of unemployment in Cairo, Egypt, which can contribute to solving the problem of unemployment, and the findings may be published and presented. The expected duration of your participation is 8 hours.

The procedures of the research will be as follows: By signing this consent form, you are agreeing to participate in the study, where you will be participating in a session, where you will work with others to identify the assets available in current interventions to deal with the problem of unemployment, and plan how those assets can be utilized.

The information you provide to this research will not be linked to anything that would reveal your identity, when it is published in a report.

There will not be any risks or discomforts associated with this research.

Participation in this research will give you the opportunity to identify current interventions working with unemployment, reflect on your experience, utilize the strengths of current interventions, which will help many stakeholders to address the issue of unemployment, and develop the community. It will also help you to network with representatives of other interventions and build capacity of your organization.

If you have any inquiries regarding the study and the research subject's right, please contact Hana Fahmy via phone, 0102336048.

Participation in this study is voluntary. Refusal to participate will involve no penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. You may discontinue participation at any time without penalty or the loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.

Signature _____

Printed Name _____

Date _____

Appendix B

Arabic Consent Form

استمارة موافقة مسبقة للمشاركة في دراسة بحثية

عنوان البحث : ورشة عمل لاستبيان مبني على إبراز نقاط القوى - جمعية علشانك يا بلدي

الباحث الرئيسي: هنا فهمي، طالبة ماجستير بالجامعة الأمريكية

البريد الإلكتروني: hanaemad@aucegypt.edu الهاتف: ٠١٠٠٢٣٣٦٠٤٨

انت مدعو للمشاركة في دراسة بحثية تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى تحديد مواطن القوة التي تتمتع بها البرامج والمبادرات التي تعالج مشكلة البطالة في القاهرة، وقد يؤدي هذا إلى استخدام أفضل للموارد لتناول مشكلة البطالة. نتائج البحث قد تنشر في دوريه متخصصه أو مؤتمر علمي أو ربما كليهما. المدة المتوقعة للمشاركة في هذا البحث هي ٨ ساعات.

اجراءات الدراسة تشمل الآتي: بإمضائك على هذه الإستمارة أنت تبدي بموافقتك على المشاركة في هذه الدراسة، حيث تشترك في اجتماع وتعمل مع آخرين على تحديد الموارد المتوفرة عندالبرامج والمبادرات التي تعالج مشكلة البطالة في القاهرة ووضع خطة لكيفية استخدام هذه الموارد.

السرية واحترام الخصوصية: المعلومات التي ستدلي بها في هذه الدراسة سوف تكون سرية. ولن يتم ربط أي معلومات تقدمها في الدراسة بأي شيء قد يفصح عن هويتك، حينما يتم نشر هذه الدراسة في تقرير.

سوف تمنحك المشاركة في هذا البحث الفرصة لتحديد الموارد المتوفرة بها البرامج والمبادرات التي تعالج مشكلة البطالة في القاهرة وكيفية استخدامها، كما تتيح لك الفرصة للتفكر في النجاحات التي حققتها من خلال تجربتك، مما قد يساعد المستفيدين من هذا البحث في تناول مشكلة البطالة وتنمية المجتمع. كما أن مشاركتك سوف تساعدك على التنسيق مع مشاركين آخرين وتنمية الكوادر الخاصة بالمؤسسة التي تمثلها.

أي أسئلة متعلقة بهذه الدراسة أو حقوق المشاركين فيها أو عند حدوث أي اصابات ناتجة عن هذه المشاركة يجب ان توجه الى هنا فهمي: ٠١٠٠٢٣٣٦٠٤٨ .

ان المشاركة في هذه الدراسة ماهي الا عمل تطوعي. حيث أن الامتناع عن المشاركة لايتضمن أى عقوبات أو فقدان أى مزايا تحق لك. ويمكنك أيضا التوقف عن المشاركة في أى وقت من دون عقوبة أو فقدان لهذه المزايا.

الامضاء:

اسم المشارك :

التاريخ :/...../.....

Appendix C

List of Compiled Interventions

| Interventions | Website |
|---|---|
| <i>Interventions Identified by Researcher and AYB</i> | |
| Ability Contact Center | http://www.abilitycc.com/ (website under construction) |
| Ashoka | http://www.ashoka.org/country/egypt |
| AWTAD | http://www.awtad-egypt.org/ |
| Better World Foundation | http://www.bwngo.org/bwngo/ict_Egypt.php |
| BP - CSR | http://www.bp.com/sectiongenericarticle.do?categoryId=9026901&contentId=7049221 |
| Caritas Egypt | http://www.caritasegypt.org/sdfr/Content/default.asp |
| CID Consulting | http://www.cid.com.eg/ |
| Coptic Evangelical Organization for Social Services (CEOSS) | http://www.ceoss.org.eg/ |
| Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) - Barclays | http://www.barclays.com.eg/home/about_us.html |
| Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) - Mobinil | http://www.mobinil.com/aboutMobinil/socialresponsibility.aspx |
| Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) - Pepsico | Not Found |
| Ebtessama | http://www.mobinil.com/aboutMobinil/socialresponsibility/Mobinilinitiativetotrainandemploy/EbtessamaFoundation.aspx |
| Egypt Enterprise Development Project (EEDP) | http://www.eedpegypt.org/w1/en/home.php |
| Egyptian Association of SMEs Development and Combating Unemployment | http://www.easedcu.com/ |
| Enterprise TVET Partnership (ETP) Building Materials | http://www.tvet.org/buildingConst.htm |
| Helwan Association for Community Development (Bashayer) | http://www.sodic.com/csr/alfanar/bashayer/ |
| Injaz | http://www.injaz-egypt.org/ |
| International Youth Foundation | http://www.iyfnet.org/country/Egypt |
| NahdetElMahrousa | http://www.nahdetmasr.org/ |
| NEBNY Foundation | http://www.nebni.com/inner.php?pageId=1&type=0&typeId=0 |
| New Horizons Foundation | http://www.newhorizons.com/content/centerSearchResults.aspx?siteid=185 |
| Plan International | http://plan-international.org/where-we-work/africa/egypt |
| Right Track | http://www.righttrackconsultancy.co.uk/ |
| Solutions Consulting | http://solutions.com.eg |

| | |
|---|---|
| Together Foundation | Not Found |
| <i>Interventions working at the individual level</i> | |
| AERI Institutional Linkages Project | http://www.angelfire.com/mo3/aeri-muciacairo/ |
| AKDN | http://www.akdn.org/egypt |
| AlashanekYaBalady for Association for Sustainable Development | http://www.ayb-sd.org/ |
| AMIDEAST | http://www.amideast.org/egypt |
| Career Counseling Egypt | http://www.careercounselingegypt.com/ |
| Dale Carnegie | http://egypt.dalecarnegie.com/ |
| Egypt @ Work | http://www.iyfnet.org/egypt@work |
| Egyptian Association for Educational Resources, E-ERA: Call Center Project; Technical and Vocational Training | http://egypt-era.org/about/ |
| Future Generation Foundation | http://www.bibalex.org/he_funding/Donors/Details.aspx?ID=57 |
| Job Masters: Mostakbalna Fi Baladna | http://jobmastergroup.com/recruitment/ |
| MasrElKheir | http://www.misrelkheir.com/ |
| National Egyptian Development Association, NEDA | http://neda.org.eg/ |
| Psych Health | http://psychealthegypt.com |
| Ressalla | http://www.resala.org/ |
| Social Fund for Development | http://www.sfdegypt.org/ |
| The Binational Fulbright Commission in Egypt, BFCE: The Community College Initiative | http://www.fulbright-egypt-cci.org/ |
| The Micro-Franchise for Enterprise and Youth Development | Not Found |
| <i>Interventions working at the relationship level</i> | |
| American Chamber | http://www.amcham.org.eg/ |
| Culture Wheel | http://www.culturewheel.com/ |
| Dasen (Development Association for Empowering Special Needs) | http://www.mobinil.com/aboutMobinil/socialresponsibility/Mobinilinitiativetotrainandemploy/Dasen.aspx |
| Job Masters: Mostakbalna Fi Baladna | http://jobmastergroup.com/recruitment/ |
| LinkedIn | http://eg.linkedin.com/ |
| MasrElKheir | http://www.misrelkheir.com/ |
| Ressalla | http://www.resala.org/ |
| Social Fund for Development | http://www.sfdegypt.org/ |
| Zdny | Not Found |
| <i>Interventions working at the community level</i> | |
| Aramex | http://www.aramex.com/ |
| Cairo University: Pathways to | http://www.pathways.cu.edu.eg/ |

| | |
|---|---|
| Higher Education Program | |
| Career Development Center: University or College (NahdetMasr) | http://www.nahdetmasr.org/eeea/cdc |
| Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) - Vodafone | http://www.vodafone.com.eg/vodafoneportalWeb/en/P612522281289125662224 |
| DACUM-PLUS | Not Found |
| Danone | http://ecosysteme.danone.com/project/danfarm-egypt/ |
| Education for Employment | http://www.efefoundation.org/internal.php?url=egypt |
| Enterprise TVET Partnership (ETP) Building Materials | http://www.tvet.org/buildingConst.htm |
| Institute of Mataria Technical College: Certified Skills Training Center | Not Found |
| Market Link | Not Found |
| Nissan | http://www.nissan.com.eg/en/web/homepage/index.htm |
| Social Fund for Development | http://www.sfdegypt.org/ |
| Technological Complex Education | http://www.edf.edu.eg/Itecs/Amiria.aspx |
| <i>Interventions working at the society level</i> | |
| Alamal bank foundation for training and employment | Not Found |
| Drosos Foundation | http://www.drosos.org/en/taxonomy/term/124 |
| Ford Foundation | http://www.fordfoundation.org/regions/middle-east-and-north-africa |
| GIZ (Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit) | http://www.giz.de/en/ |
| Higher Education Enhancement Program, HEEP | http://www.heepf.org.eg/ |
| Sawiris Foundation: Maadi Youth Training Center | http://www.sawirisfoundation.org/ |
| Social Fund for Development | http://www.sfdegypt.org/ |
| USAID | http://egypt.usaid.gov/en/Pages/default.aspx |
| Women Entrepreneurship and Leadership Program (WEL) - The American University in Cairo (AUC) | http://www.aucegypt.edu/business/wel/Pages/home.aspx |
| World Bank | http://www.worldbank.org/en/country/egypt |

Appendix D

Appreciative Inquiry Workshop for Interventions dealing with Unemployment in Cairo

May 10, 2012

Inquire

- Interview your partner using the appreciative interview guide and questions below:
 - Each person will have ten minutes to interview their partner.
 - Encourage your partner to tell their story, draw them out with your positive energy and excitement. As the interviewer, focus on listening—don’t jump in with your own story.
 - You will be telling the group about your interview, so take good notes and listen for great quotes.
 - These forms will be collected by the researcher.

Interview Form

- At which level/s does your initiative intervene?

- What are the activities implemented at your initiative?

1- Tell me about a peak experience you have had in working on issues of unemployment through the program that you represent.

[illegible]

2- What are the elements that made this experience possible? (think about your qualities, the beneficiaries, the organization you work for, the values, coworkers, the activities, the model, nature of work)

[illegible]

3- What are three wishes which you would like to see happen in your organization which would make it possible to have more peak experiences as you work to solve the problem of unemployment?

[illegible]

Appendix E

Appreciative Inquiry Workshop for Interventions dealing with Unemployment in Cairo

May 10, 2012

Imagine

Imagine that it is 2017, 5 years from now, your intervention was selected to be interviewed by one of the prominent TV presenters because of its outstanding work with unemployed youth. You are given national recognition because you have been so successful in helping young individuals improve their lives because they are unemployed. The presenter begins the interview by asking you to describe what you have done to make your initiative so effective, “How did your initiative manage to have such a positive impact on unemployed youth?” “Why do beneficiaries seek your initiative?” “How were you able to sustain the success and continuation of your program?”

Discuss these questions with your group and create a picture that illustrates your vision for future employment initiatives.

Appendix F

Appreciative Inquiry Workshop for Interventions dealing with Unemployment in Cairo

May 10, 2012

Innovate

Choose a theme from the list, and develop actionable statements, “proactive propositions”, that bridges the gap between the strengths of the interventions currently active, and the vision to those interventions.

Proactive propositions should be:

- Be in the present tense
- Be affirmative
- Stretch the imagination and go beyond the normal
- Be a desirable and possible outcome
- Consider the socio-ecological model